THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast

Dreamcast™

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EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

CRAZY TAXI

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TOMB RAIDER

CONFIRMED: LARA'S COMING!

GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

WORTH GETTING BANGED UP FOR?

HOW TO...

UNLOCK *SOUL CALIBUR*'S SECRETS

SOLVE YOUR EMAIL WOES

GET BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A POWERBOAT

ISSUE #5 £4.99 (OVERSEAS £5.99)

03

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PLUS: SHENMUE • METROPOLIS SR • SLAVE ZERO • NBA 2K • RED DOG • RAYMAN 2

ON THIS MONTH'S CD

THREE AWESOME PLAYABLE DEMOS!

RAYMAN 2

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

We gave you the movie last month, now sample *Rayman 2* for real with this one-level playable demo. Its 3D platform action, colourfully lush visuals and fiendish puzzles looks set to take Dreamcast by storm. The final game will feature modes and levels that are exclusive to the Dreamcast version, and the difficulty level promises to provide a challenge for even the most hardcore gamers.

GREECE JAPAN

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

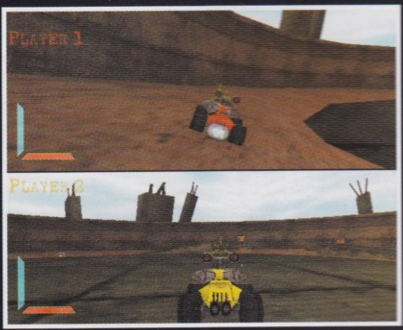
Who said 2D was dead? As well as this month's feature on 2D vs 3D (see page 52), we've also got this demo of the latest incarnation of Capcom's legendary beat 'em up series. You get to try out Arcade mode playing as old favourites Ken and Guile. There's a choice of 50Hz or 60Hz modes, and you can opt to pit your wits against the console or mash up a friend. Just don't laugh at Ken's girlie hair, okay?

RYU
73
GUARD
GUARD
GUILE
A-ISM
MAX
MAX
A-ISM
3
3

RED DOG

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

Argonaut's innovative tank shooting game will be lumbering into the shops shortly, so test your mettle in this playable demo of the game's volcano level. You can even play against a friend in skirmish mode to get warmed up for the full game when it's released in early March. Again, there's a choice of 50Hz or 60Hz modes to ensure that you get the best performance out of your telly.



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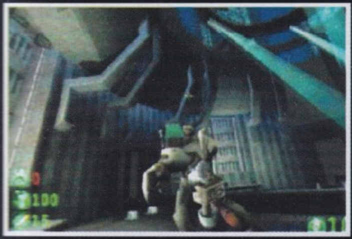
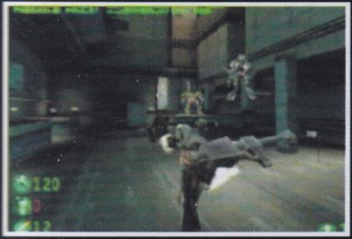
NESTLING ON THE COVER OF THIS COPY OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* IS THE LATEST INSTALMENT OF DREAM ON. WHAT DO YOU GET? READ ON…

SLAVE ZERO

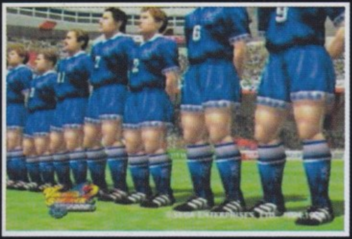
MOVIE
It's the return of the Mechs! *Slave Zero* sees you taking control of a kick-arse giant robot, blowing the living daylights out of other kick-arse giant robots. Now *that's* a good game concept!

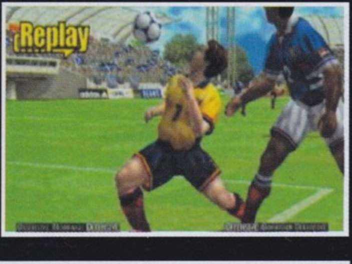




VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1

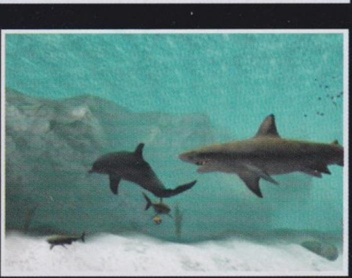
MOVIE
We had the exclusive review last month, now feast your eyes on the dazzling visuals from Sega's new footie title. With *UEFA* and *Worldwide* already on the park, this is the new contender.

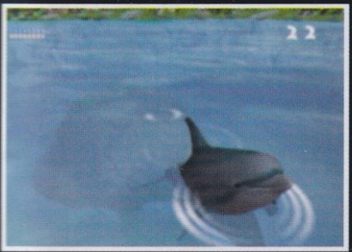


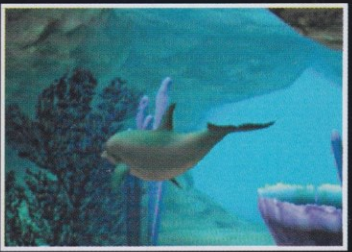


ECCO THE DOLPHIN

EXCLUSIVE SLIDE SHOW
Saving the environment has never looked this good before. *Ecco* is already shaping up to be a spectacular gaming experience, so here's a teaser to whet your appetite. Not your actual appetite, of course – we all know that hunting dolphins for food is A Bad Thing! *Ecco* is undoubtedly one of the most innovative games on the horizon.







10.02.2000

YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET

WE CAME BACK FROM CHRISTMAS to find the inimitable *Crazy Taxi* poised for a review. A game of this calibre deserves something very special, which is why we've gone to town on it this month. The feature starting on page 8 and our review beginning on page 66 go some way towards showing you just what an awesome game this is, but until you pick up a controller and start bashing that pad you'll never fully appreciate what a great month we've had in the *ODM* office.

Unfortunately, as you'll soon realise, there were only four games available for review this issue. It being that awkward post-Christmas lull, *Crazy Taxi* and *NBA 2K* have made our lives worth living again. But if you think Dreamcast's horizons look a tad limited, then think again. Some phenomenal announcements (all revealed in this month's Up Front section, starting on page 20) mean that there are some truly impressive names heading towards a DC near you soon – and we won't have to wait until next Christmas to get our hands on them.

By far the most impressive of these upcoming games is *Tomb Raider 2* which will hit Dreamcast in six weeks' time. After months of speculation about whether this game will hit the world's greatest console, suddenly it appears from nowhere, almost ready for review. Lara's twin assets are almost certainly about to be a huge bonus for Dreamcast.

But it doesn't end there. *Grand Theft Auto 2*, one of the most memorable and innovative driving games ever produced, is also poised for release. Previewed on page 42, this trail-blazing title brings the manic and illicit activities of the world's worst driving club direct to a screen near you. And you can bet that it'll be riding at the top of the charts for months – provided it can keep Lara at bay.

And then there's *Shenmue*. Admittedly it still feels like it's further off than the space station, but the news from the States this issue has got us all seriously excited. For the last three issues, *Shenmue* has appeared top of our regular reader Most Wanted list (page 27), and now news reaches us that the English language version is under way. Best of all, the game will include spoken text – not subtitles. Life just doesn't get any better.

These sure-fire chart-toppers are exactly what Dreamcast needs, and they guarantee that we're all in line for a great spring and summer. True online gaming may well have been delayed until the summer now, but with titles like these coming along who cares? We'll be button-bashing with abandon.

Finally, before I go there's just enough space to let you know that this is my last issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. Next month I'm off to work on a new launch, but I'll be leaving the mag in the very capable hands of Warren Chrismas. To those who've written in over the past six months, thank you for your comments and suggestions – you've helped make the *ODM* what it is today. To those who haven't , Warren is just as keen to hear what you think, so keep those emails rolling in. The address, as always, is letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk. And remember to be back here for the next issue on Thursday 9 March.

All the best,
Mark Higham, Editor-in-Chief.

M.MOLYNEUX 1999
SOUL FIGHTER™
魂
TOKA
piggyback
MINDSCAPE® ENTERTAINMENT
0/33 SAVED SOULS
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SAVED 13
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SOUL S

This image is composed from less than 1% of the gameplay in Soul Fighter.™ Heaven only knows what the other 99% is like.
Free-roaming, next generation Soul Fighter.™ Conceived for Dreamcast.™ Destined for greatness.

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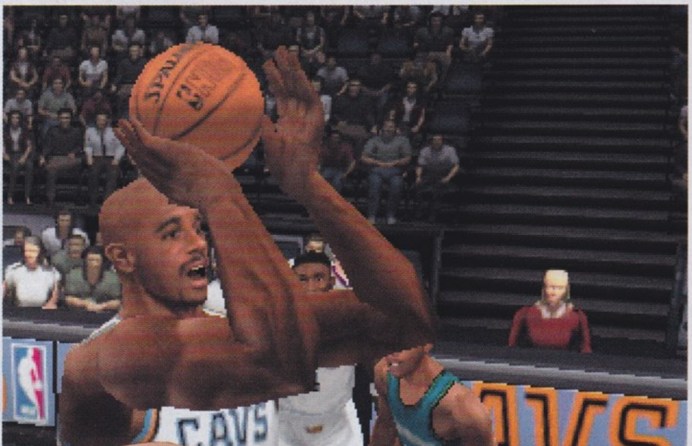
▷ Yep, another driving game, page 46.



△ *NBA* in awesome basketball game shock. Page 78.

Dreamcast.
Dream

△ There's more to Premier League footballer Michael Ball than meets the eye. Page 38.

△ Take on a secret life of crime. Yep, *GTA2* is finally here. Page 42.

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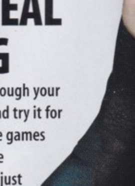

◁ If *Power Stone* blew you away, then wait until you see the sequel. Page 21.

△ The bitch is coming to Dreamcast. For all the news see page 20, then turn to page 40 for our exclusive preview.

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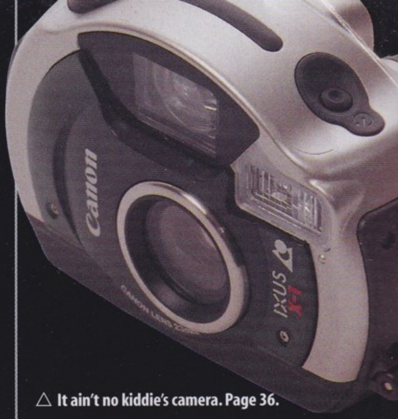

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Sega group.

△ *Crazy Taxi* – crazy game, world exclusive review. Page 66.

HALO EN
TAXI
TAXI
46
TAXI
3.24

GIFT OF THE CAB

"SOMEDAY A REAL RAIN WILL COME AND WASH ALL THIS SCUM OFF THE STREETS."

TRAVIS BICKLE, *TAXI DRIVER* (1976)

"I TELL HIM TO GET OUT AND WAIT WHILE I PARK, BECAUSE I'M GOING TO KICK HIS BUTT. AS HE STEPS OUT, I FLIP HIM THE BIRD AND FLOOR IT. I GO GET A CUP OF COFFEE."

NIGHT CABBIE, COLUMNIST, *SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER* (1997)

"SHUT UP AND MOVE YO BUTT!"

B D JOE, *CRAZY TAXI* (2000)

ILLUSTRATIONS: ADAM HAYES

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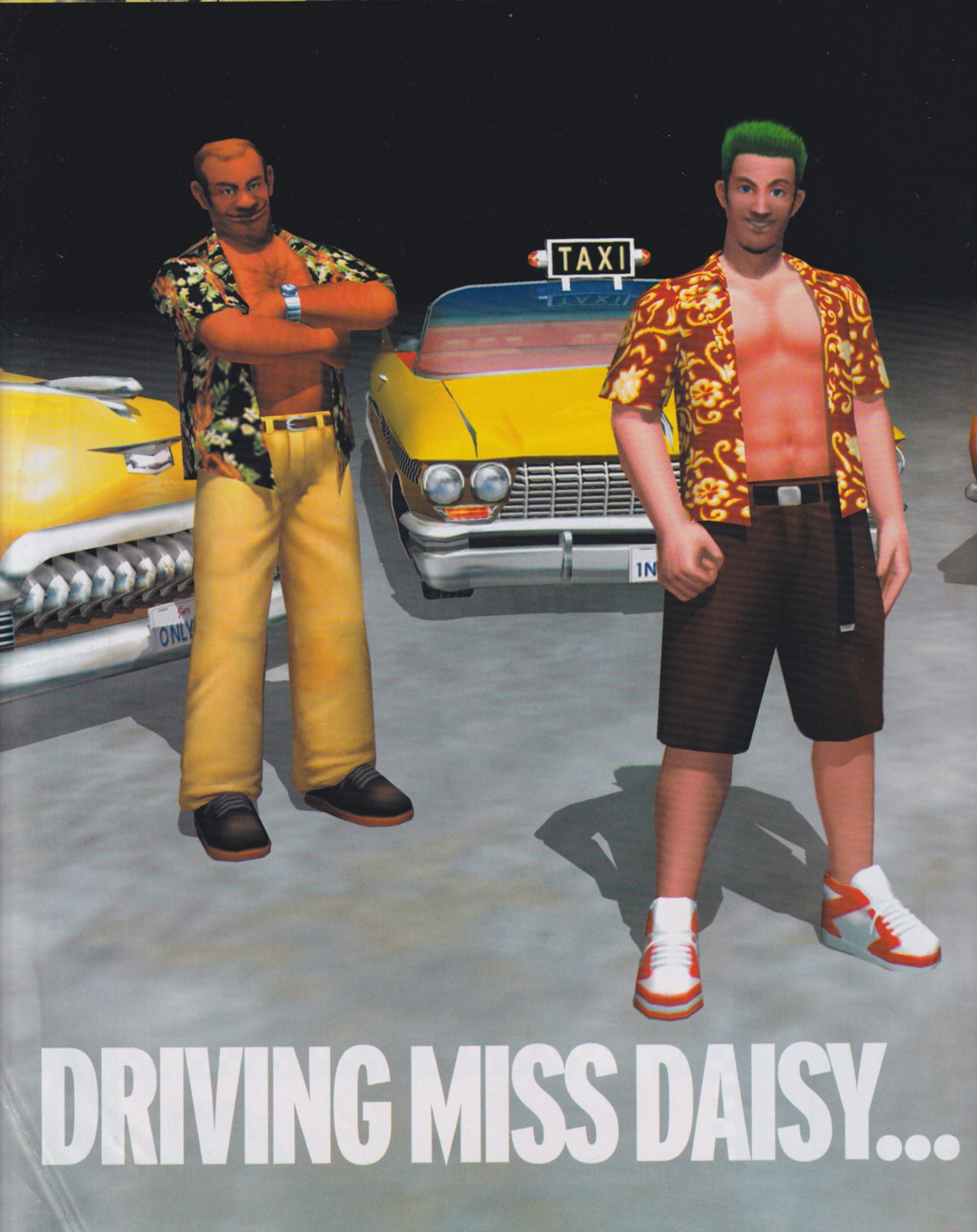
TAXI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DRIVING MISS DAISY...

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CRAZY!

UNHINGED TAXI DRIVERS. THE IDEA ISN'T A NEW ONE. BUT THE DAYS OF A MOHICAN'D ROBERT DE NIRO SPRINGING TO MIND ARE OVER. THERE'S A NEW BREED OF ALTOGETHER CRAZIER CABBIES ON THE LOOSE...

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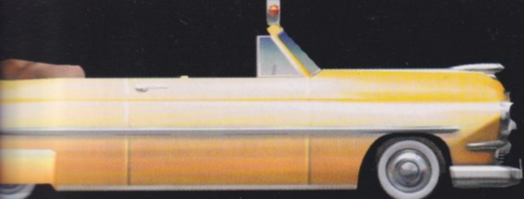

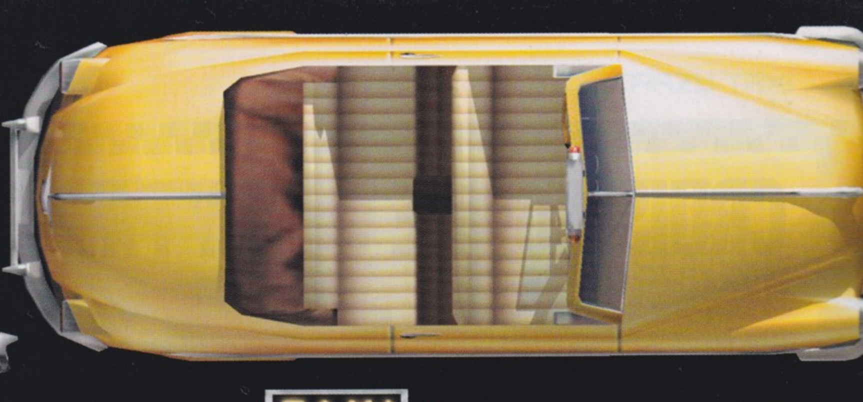

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CRAZY TAXI

THE CLEVEREST, CRAZIEST CAR CRUISING CONCEPT CRASHES HOME. BUT BEFORE THE WORLD-EXCLUSIVE REVIEW ON PAGE 66, WE TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT MAKES *CRAZY TAXI* FEEL SO REAL. **TOM GUISE** IS YOUR DRIVER

MEET GUS MANCINI. Forty-two years old. Fed up with life and the way things were going, he's become a cab driver. A lonely existence? Measly income? Bad attitude from people who don't give a shit about him? Hell no. All of a sudden life is one big breeze. Cruising around all day in a drop-top jalopy, bathed in perpetual sunshine. Meeting exciting new people. Holding their oh-so-precious lives as lazily as he grips the free-spinning steering wheel. Caning it around town with flagrant disregard for the law or human life. Earning a high-rolling income, and pulling in big tips by scaring the living beejezuz out of his pop-eyed passengers. Being totally indestructible! But most of all, having a wicked time. Yeah, boyee, where do I sign up?

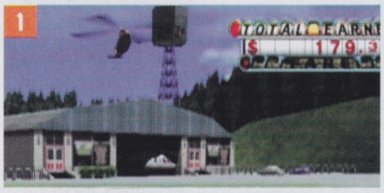
Okay, take a chill pill. It's not real. Just some insane exhaust pipe dream. But one anybody can share, through *Crazy Taxi*, the latest reality-departing Dreamcast experience from the finest fun professors at laboratoire Sega. Having previously taken us motor racing around giant slot machines, kung fu fighting at the bottom of the ocean, and chasing blue hedgehogs around psychedelic landscapes, this trip into the world according to Sega is an altogether easier one to swallow.

When released in Japanese arcades last year, *Crazy Taxi* was actually part of the Sega Professional Series, a range of games based on real occupations. Other titles included *Brave Fire Fighters*, a hose-operating gun game, and *Emergency Call Ambulance*, a race-against-time rescue dash.

Crazy Taxi is different. For a start, it doesn't take its trade as seriously as the others. Or at all. But strangely it's also the closest representation of a profession of all the games. And that's simply because *Crazy Taxi* gives you an amazing amount of freedom – both in a vibrant, living city, and with a range of driving techniques more akin to a sport than a courier job. To better understand it, we're going to first take you around the streets of Insanity Francisco… ▷

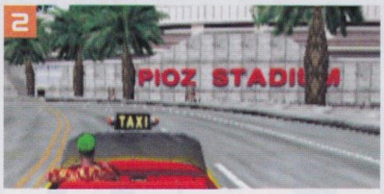
CRUISING THE CRAZY PAVING

THE MEASURE OF ANY cabbie worth their waiting time is how masterfully they know their streets. It's the key to success in *Crazy Taxi* too, with two sprawling cities to tax your taxi talents, one of them specially constructed by Sega's streetsmiths for the Dreamcast conversion. These mini-metropolises are far more than your usual race game roadways. Like the real deal, they're filled with a variety of locations to pick up and drop off. How you get your punters from A to B is up to you. Here's a tourist guide to some of the awesome attractions of the classic arcade city.



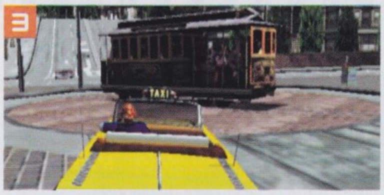
FLIGHTSEEING TOURS

Helicopter rides are popular among the Crazy City community. There are regular flights from the heliport, with easy taxi drop-off on the helipad.



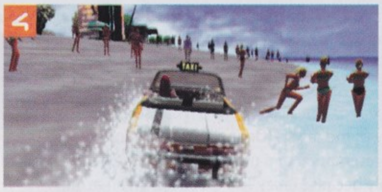
CALLING SPORTS FANS!

The Pioz Baseball Stadium is a massive complex with large on-site parking facilities to plough through. Visit the tennis courts too!



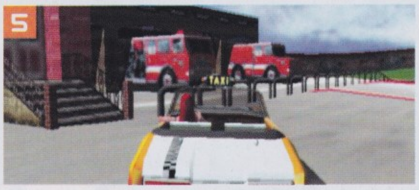
CONVENIENT CABLE RIDES

The city's motorised cable cars provide comfortable transport between uptown and the beachfront. If they're not rammed off the rails.



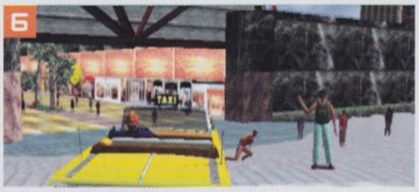
BAYWATCH OUT!

Soft sands, warm surf and fresh sea breeze. Top up your tan, take a dip, or run screaming from a taxi-driving lunatic trying to mow down sunbathers.



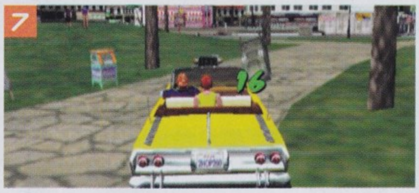
LOCAL SERVICES

The city features the full range of emergency services. A hospital to cater for traumatised crash victims and fire brigade to cut them from their vehicles.



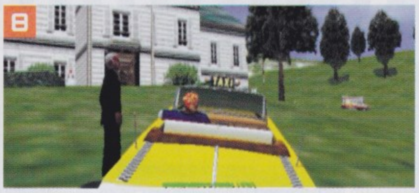
YOUR SHOPPING NEEDS

Catered for at the massive Tennants Road mall, next to the Osmous Hotel. Also provides a convenient short cut for speeding vehicles through bustling pedestrian area.



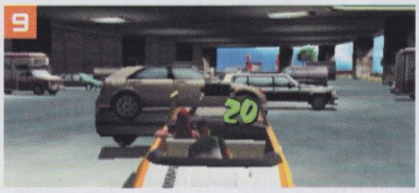
RELAX IN THE PARK

Chill out, enjoy a hot dog and visit the legendary Popcorn Mania diner. Alternatively, trash all the phone booths and benches, and rip up the grass in a big car.



GOD'S HOUSE

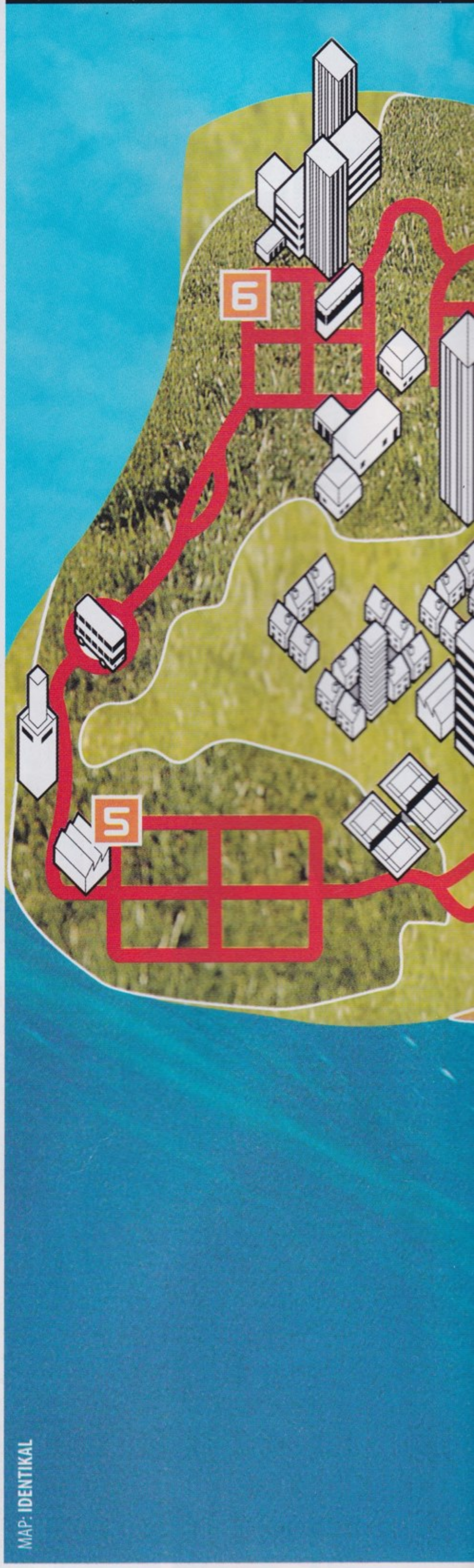
There's no shortage of preachers in town – all big fans of the local taxi service. Clearly they're needed to calm the traffic-fearing townsfolk holed up at the church.



MULTI-STOREY PARKING

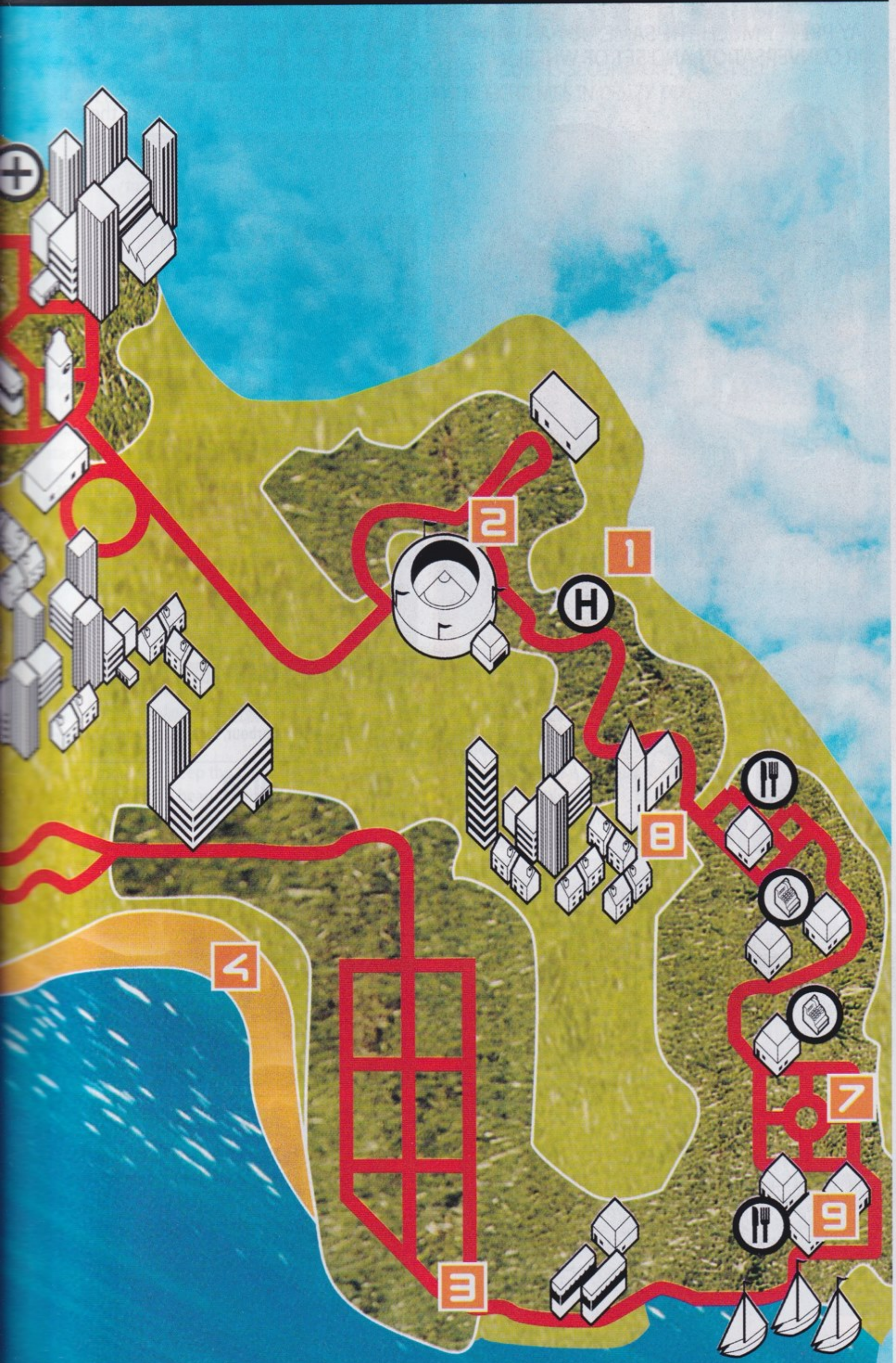
Free car storage in walking distance of the harbour and dining quarter. Don't be surprised to find your vehicle trashed by cabbies using the first floor as a short cut.

WELCOME TO CRAZY CITY



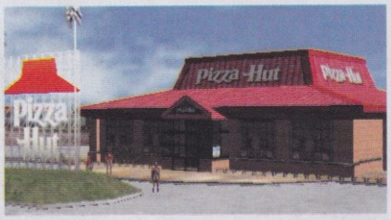
MAP: IDENTIKAL

PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY

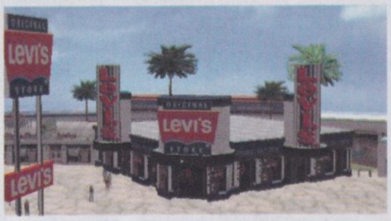


SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

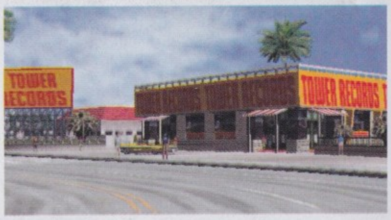
Product placement in videogames is nothing new, but like everything else in *Crazy Taxi*, here it's taken to the extreme. Five major real-life brands feature in both cities, and you can visit their deluxe stores



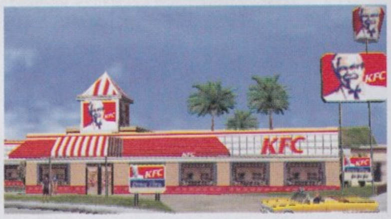
PIZZA HUT
Human street pizza served on the kerb outside.



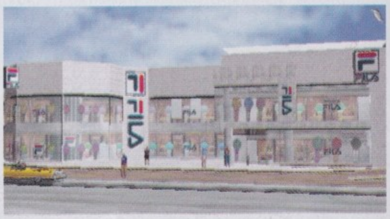
THE ORIGINAL LEVI'S STORE
See how Sta-Prest® they stay with a cab hurtling at them.



TOWER RECORDS
The only place to go when looking for greatest hits.



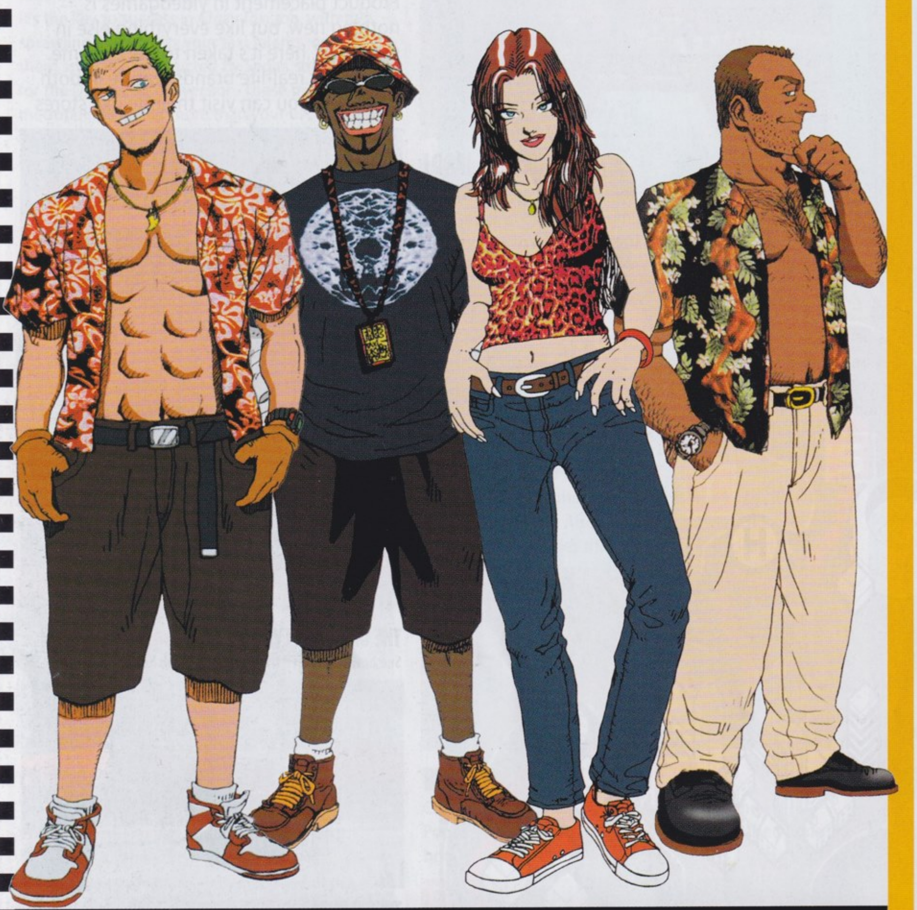
KFC
The Colonel's chicken emporium has speedy drive-thru access.



FILA
Running shoes are very popular among pedestrian shoppers.

ARE YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

THE FOUR CLINICALLY INSANE CABBIES ALL PLAY PRETTY MUCH THE SAME, BUT AS WITH REAL CABBIES, YOU'LL BE INFLUENCED BY THEIR CONVERSATION AND SET OF WHEELS.



AXEL

LICENCE PLATE # 1NOM155

(Means I no miss, or don't make mistakes.)

Gets short-tempered when things are going wrong, so expect plenty of snappy retorts to snotty passengers if the traffic's a bit heavy. Drives a '60s-era classic cab.

BD JOE

LICENCE PLATE # 2HOP260

(Means let's get wild and crazy.)

A chilled out character who doesn't get too wound up even when things get hairy. Hmm, hopefully he isn't artificially inducing his 'calm' manner.

GENA

LICENCE PLATE # 5EXY515

(Means Sexy Sister.)

The cool, no-nonsense female driver of the pack. Concerned only with getting maximum speed from her car and maximum tips from her passengers. Don't expect her to be too chatty.

GUS

LICENCE PLATE # ONLY777

(Means he's only aiming for the jackpot.)

The old-timer of the bunch. Gus sounds like John Wayne and isn't adverse to telling his passengers to shut up if they annoy him. Cruises around in a 1955 jalopy.

CITIZENS MIFFED

The illusion of a real city is made all the more convincing because of its varied – and mouthy – populace. Here's just a small cross-section of the cab-using community.

THE OLD BIDDY

Most likely to go to: one of the city's many train stations.

COCKY KID

Most likely to go to: the Fila store, probably just to 'hang out'.

MORE TEA VICAR?

Most likely to go to: the church, as if you hadn't already guessed.

TEENY BOPPER

Most likely to go to: Popcorn Mania, the coolest diner in town.

POSH LADY

Most likely to go to: Yacht harbour, for a champagne cruise.

FAT GIT

Most likely to go to: baseball stadium, to eat more hot dogs.

SIR DOUGLAS BADER

Most likely to go to: heliport, to meet his equally flash chums.

MISTER SUAVE

Most likely to go to: the park, for a date (a girl really waits for him).

ANNOYING TOURIST

Most likely to go to: heliport, to record a dull aerial home video.

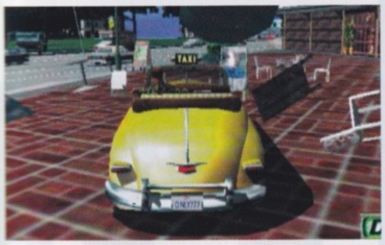
PUNK

Most likely to go to: Tower Records, to buy some Boyzone.

TAXI
TAXI
TAXI
TAXI
TAXI
5EXY515
5EXY515

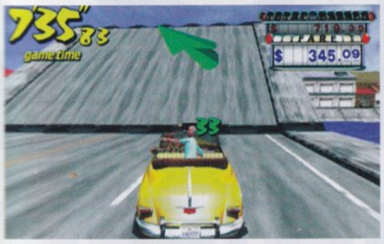
INSANE IN THE FAST LANE

IN THE ART OF CAB DRIVING, RECKLESS USE OF SHORT CUTS IS SECOND ONLY TO STREET KNOWLEDGE, AND A TECHNIQUE TAKEN TO LUNATIC EXTREMES IN *CRAZY TAXI*



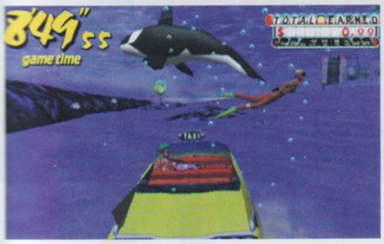
SCENERY SMASHING

A popular pastime in New York car chases. Phone booths, bins, railings, café tables and convenient stacks of crates all succumb satisfactorily with little speed loss.



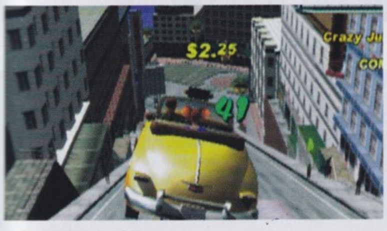
THE BRIDGE IS UP!

All the more fun. Keep the pedal floored to clear it, and stop with a head-on slam into a shop front. Misjudge it though, and it's time for an early bath.



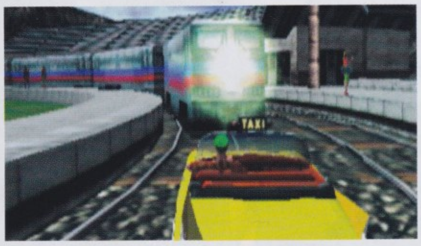
WET 'N' WILD

Crashing into the sea isn't a problem in *Crazy Taxi*. In some cases it's a short cut. At the arcade city beach, there are even snorkelling citizens hailing cabs and a killer whale.



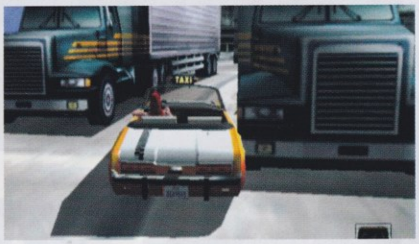
DOWNHILL DASH

The stunts of countless San Francisco movies pale in comparison. At top speeds you can clear the cable car and more with your aerial antics.



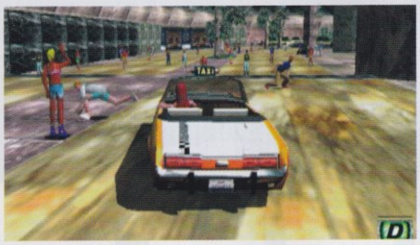
RAIL GUNNING

The new Dreamcast city (see game review on page 66) features two rail systems. Scraping past an oncoming train is fun, but bursting out of a bustling underground station is even better.



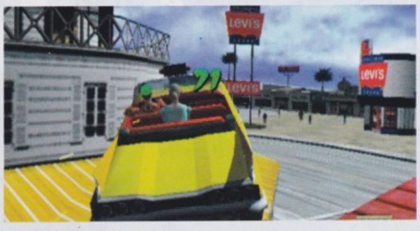
WEDGED BETWEEN TWO JUGS

Juggernauts, that is – *Planes, Train And Automobiles*-style. The difference here is that you can take those steel suckers off the road without even spilling your coffee.



SQUISH 'EM

If only you could. Racing through pedestrian areas like parks and shopping malls at top speed is excellent fun. Cackle like some evil super-villain at the screaming, fleeing, puny humans.



ROOF ACCESS

Crazy Taxi's buildings aren't just 2D shop fronts. In many cases you find yourself on a roof. Hell, in many cases you find would-be customers there too!

TRUE LIFE CRAZY TAXI

NO 1: ANONYMOUS, FROM NEW YORK

"One day I was driving and this very large woman got in. The suspension in my cab needed fixing, and she weighed down the back enough to cause the muffler to drag along the road.

"We started down the road to Central Park, when this man in the cab in front of us threw out his cigarette. There was a big puddle of gas that had leaked out of my car, and the sparks from the cigarette caused a small fire while we were at the red light. The fire crawled up the leak and into my gas well, causing the back seat to ignite. And the large woman's clothes began to catch fire. She leaped out of the car and into the fountain in the park. I yelled out the window: 'This ride's on me!' and pulled away."

- *For more, check out www.nycabbie.com*

NO 2: LINDA BROWN, FROM LOS ANGELES

"Cruising Wilshire Blvd around 1.30am. El Rey theatre is breaking Asian dance night. Valets are working hard. Cars lined up. Asian male running from across the street shouting: 'Stop him, he's taking my car!' as a Honda Prelude pulls out in front of me. Asian male reaches car, grabs handle, gets door open. I'm stopped, waiting. All of a sudden five bouncer types materialise out of nowhere. Then bouncer types and five or six asian boys simultaneously pull their guns. Three of them are three inches in front of the cab. Everyone points at each other, wildly trying to decide who to shoot. Car thief dragged from Prelude, screaming, to sidewalk for an ass-whipping. Bouncer type smiles at me and motions me to move along. I pull around Prelude and drive away."

- *For more: check out www.geocities.com/MotorCity/2275*

NO 3: ANONYMOUS, FROM THE USA

"I arrived at an address where I picked up a little old lady with a Siamese cat. She got in the back and told me where to go, but to make sure I drove along major freeways all the way.

"As we started moving, the cat started meowing. After half an hour of having to put up with the bloody annoying cat, I hit the freeway. The little old lady told me we were running late and to step on it. I sped up to about 130kmh (78mph). Next thing I knew, the old lady wound down the window and threw the cat out! I saw it tumbling along the road, leaving a trail of blood and fur behind. I slammed on the brakes and checked the cat, which was dead by now. I got back in and gave the old lady a mouthful. But in a very calm voice she said: 'You can take me home now. That cat gave me the shits'. I drove her straight back, not saying a word the whole journey.

"When we arrived, she calmly paid the fare ($186) and went inside her house. I reported it to the police, who charged her with animal cruelty. It would have been cheaper to have a vet put it down. But it made my night very profitable."

- *For more: check out www.geocities.com/MotorCity/2275*

Some stri

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Some ac

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thrust upo

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 ver. 2000.1

You can't predict when genius will strike. But you can prepare for it. With a built-in soccer pundit, Virtua Striker 2 saves your favourite goals and decides whose is best.

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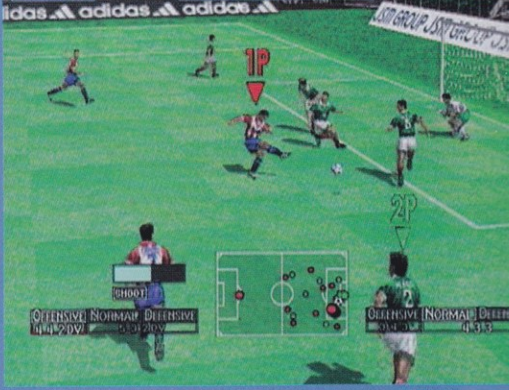
SEGA

kers are born

eat.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OFFENSIVE NORMAL DEFENSIVE

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Choose from 32 world teams and 5 different tournaments. Then re-live those golden moments again and again. Your mates will love it.

Dreamcast

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www.dreamcast-europe.com

Dreamarena

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YEAH BABY!

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is coming to Dreamcast in March

Dreamcast
Dreamcast
Dreamcast
Dreamcast

FOLLOWING MONTHS of intense speculation, Derby-based developers Core Design have confirmed *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is* being converted for Dreamcast.

Set to hit stores in March, *The Last Revelation* is the fourth – and undoubtedly the best – game in the multimillion-selling 3D action-adventure series.

In terms of gameplay and options, the Dreamcast version is expected to closely match the PlayStation and PC editions released to much acclaim at the tail end of last year.

Visually, however, it should eclipse both. Core promise that *The Last Revelation* on Dreamcast will be comparable to the PC edition running on a high-end, accelerated machine (as shown in our preview on page 40), with the addition of several new and improved features including real-time shadow casting and enhanced lighting.

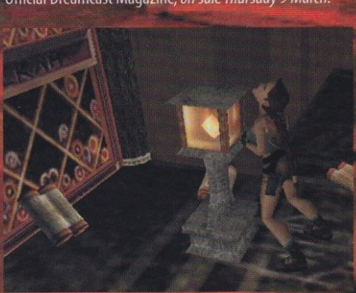
News of the impending release came just a few weeks after the end of arrangements between Sony and the game's publisher Eidos Interactive, who kept console versions of *Tomb Raider* exclusively tied to the PlayStation.

Speaking on the day of the announcement, Adrian Smith, Core Design's Operations Director, said: "We're delighted to bring Lara Croft to a new audience of Dreamcast owners, and to use the power of the console to offer something a little more special than the versions currently available."

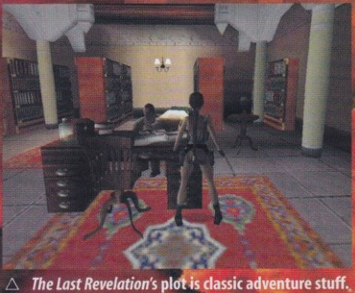
"*Tomb Raider* was a key title for the Saturn," he added. "In fact, Core have produced at least one key title for each of Sega's consoles, including the likes of *Chuck Rock* [on Megadrive] and *Thunderhawk* [on Mega-CD]."

Equally delighted with the news was Kazutoshi Miyake, chief operating officer of Sega Europe. "With today's announcement, Dreamcast now has the majority of the world's major games software companies developing titles for the console," he said. "It's an outstanding achievement for Sega."

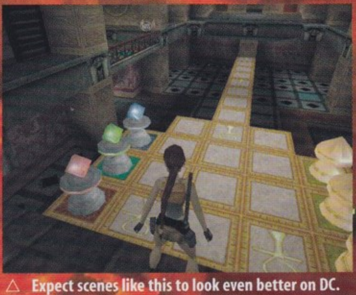
• *For more info on* Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation *take a look at our preview on page 40. Oh, and watch out for an exclusive review – a world first – in next month's issue of* Official Dreamcast Magazine, *on sale Thursday 9 March.*



△ **These screenshots are taken from the PC version.**



△ ***The Last Revelation's* plot is classic adventure stuff.**



△ **Expect scenes like this to look even better on DC.**

POWER 2 THE PEOPLE

Confirmed: Capcom's sequel is on its way to Dreamcast

FOLLOWING LAST MONTH'S NEWS that Capcom are working on a Naomi-based arcade sequel to their award-winning, go-anywhere, grab-anything fighting game *Power Stone*, we can now confirm that the title is *definitely* also coming to Dreamcast.

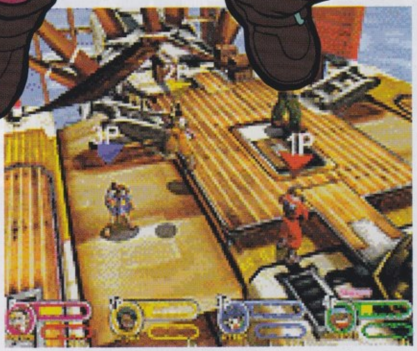
The Japanese developers announced that arcade and Dreamcast editions of *Power Stone 2* will be released concurrently in Japan this spring, and that it will be possible to share data between the two versions using Visual Memory units.

Capcom have also released some specific details on the game. Arguably the most notable new feature is the inclusion of Battle Royale mode which enables four players to slug it out simultaneously – an option which was originally intended to appear in the first game.

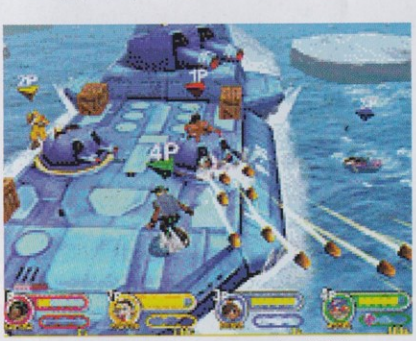
Four new characters will feature alongside the original cast. These are Accel (a lone ranger), Julia (a doll-like princess), Pete (a young boy) and, finally, Guruman who, rather bizarrely, is an evil chef.

Information on the levels is a little sketchy at the moment, but it's known that there will be five areas – Dark Castle, Iceberg, Tomb, Blue Sky and Space Station. As with the original game, each will be packed with interactive elements which can be used while fighting. All the areas will be split into further sub-areas: Iceberg, for example, not only features fighting on boats, but also in the sea.

There's no firm news yet on when we're likely to see *Power Stone 2* released in the UK, but we hope to see it sometime in the late summer. Rest assured that we'll keep you informed with regular updates.



△ **More players, more characters, more moves, more fun.**



△ **You can use this battleship's giant guns in mid-fight.**

ODM + HMV = £££S OFF!!!

Save cash every month with our exclusive offer

STARTING THIS VERY ISSUE, readers of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* can save £5 off any full-priced Dreamcast game at HMV stores all across the UK. And that's not just this month, but *every* month.

Yes, now when you spend your hard-earned £4.99 each month, not only do you get the best Dreamcast magazine in the country plus an exclusive demo cover disc, you also effectively get your money back! In fact, you *gain* 1p – even more if you subscribe (see page 64 for details). Can't be bad, eh?

And it gets better. To kick off the promotion in style, those ultra-generous peeps at HMV have come up with the ultimate competition for any Dreamcast owner – a free game every week for a whole year! For full details turn to page 32.

GAMES NEWS

EIDOS GO BERSERK

Eidos Interactive have picked up the rights to publish ASCII's *Berserk* in the Western world. However, due to copyright problems, the ultra-violent Japanese hack 'em up (featured in our Blood & Guns feature last month) will almost certainly undergo a name change. It's due out in the US in late March; a UK release date is to be confirmed.

ONE IN FOUR MILLION

Sega have announced that they'd sold 650,000 Dreamcasts in Europe by January 11. In North America sales had reached a whopping 1.5 million by December 24, with an average of 10 Dreamcasts sold every minute during the 30 days leading up to Christmas. The figure is now thought to be up to 1.65 million in the US, which matches sales in Japan.

FURBALLS UP

Liverpool-based Bizarre Creations have been forced to change the name of their fab-looking cutesy shooter *Furballs* to avoid conflict with a similarly named US cartoon character. The newly christened *Fur Fighters* is due out around April via Acclaim. Watch out for a full preview in *Official Dreamcast Magazine* real soon.

SEAMAN DELAYED

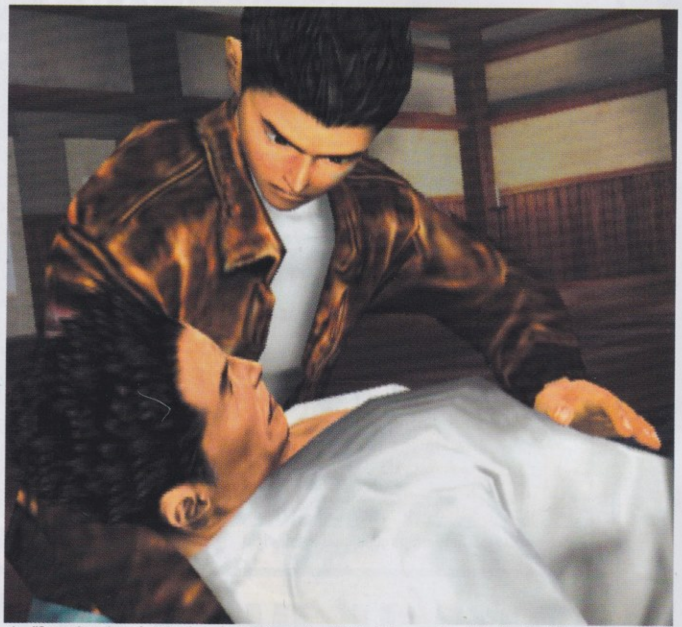
Sega have delayed the American release of *Seaman: Forbidden Pet* (featured in last month's *ODM*), the bizarre virtual pet simulator which has sold over 365,000 copies in Japan. Originally due out in the US in the spring, it's now unlikely to surface until the autumn. There's still no official word, but we do expect to see *Seaman* released in the UK at some point. However, it's unlikely to reach other European territories due to language translation difficulties.

READY 2 HELP?

Midway are working on a sequel to their massively popular boxing game *Ready 2 Rumble*, and they want *you* to tell 'em what features you'd like to see in it. To have your say, go to their website at www.midway.com/games/titles/r2r/survey/r2r_index.html.

SHENMUE HITS THE EAST

It's out, it's gorgeous, but when are we going to see an English language version released in the UK?



△ **"Sorry, I can't understand a thing you're saying. We'll sit here and wait for the English version, okay?"**

JAPANESE GAMERS were finally able to get their hands on the long-awaited *Shenmue* on December 29, but it looks as though we're going to have to wait a while before we see the game released in the UK.

With 380,000 copies sold after just three weeks, Sega were well on track to exceed their target of 500,000 by the end of January. Indeed, Yu Suzuki's game shot straight to top spot in the Japanese console games chart, deposing the PlayStation driving game *Gran Turismo 2*, and has become the best-selling Dreamcast game to date in Japan.

However, despite *Shenmue*'s strong sales performance in the Far East, serious question marks remain over its release throughout the rest of the world.

The revolutionary game, which some industry analysts believe cost Sega in the region of three billion yen (more than £17m) to produce, features in-game Japanese dialogue which amounts to more than 2,000 pages of script. As such, translation and localisation is said to be a truly mammoth task.

Despite rumours to the contrary spreading via the Internet, Sega of America inform us that:"No official confirmation has been made regarding [an] English voice-over on *Shenmue*."

We do, however, still expect the American edition of the game to feature English language voice-overs rather than subtitles, and this should of course lead to an English-dubbed version being released in the UK at some point.

The news isn't so good for our gaming friends on the continent. *Official Dreamcast Magazine* understands that full translation of the game into other European languages is extremely unlikely to happen.

There's no official word at all on release dates, although it's thought likely that *Shenmue* will reach shelves in America late in the year, possibly in time for the Thanksgiving weekend in late November. And in the UK? Well, one thing's for sure: it won't come out here before it's released over the pond.

We know how keen you all are to get your hands on *Shenmue* – it's been top of our Readers Most Wanted chart (see page 27) since we started the poll three issues ago – and, believe us, we're desperate to play an English language version too.

But while we do of course intend to keep you fully up to date with news on developments in *Official Dreamcast Magazine* over the coming months, our advice right now is to forget about *Shenmue*. For a little while, at least.

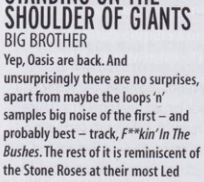
HEAR THIS!

DA BEST NEW MUSIC

OASIS
STANDING ON THE SHOULDER OF GIANTS

BIG BROTHER

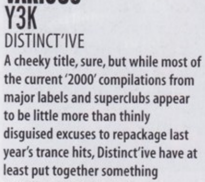
Yep, Oasis are back. And unsurprisingly there are no surprises, apart from maybe the loops 'n' samples big noise of the first – and probably best – track, *Fkin' In The Bushes*. The rest of it is reminiscent of the Stone Roses at their most Led Zeppelinesque, although a couple of tracks remind you more of a boring pub band at their most dull. *RA***



VARIOUS
Y3K

DISTINCT'IVE

A cheeky title, sure, but while most of the current '2000' compilations from major labels and superclubs appear to be little more than thinly disguised excuses to repackage last year's trance hits, Distinct'ive have at least put together something sounding genuinely fresh and exciting. Mixed by Hyper, *Y3K* throws together previously unreleased and exclusive progressive breakbeat tracks featuring the likes of BT, Hybrid, Digweed, Way Out West and Freq Nasty. Damn fine it is too. *WC*



AIR
THE VIRGIN SUICIDES

VIRGIN

Not a 'proper' third album from the French comedown kings, but a score from the Sofia Coppola movie due out in March. *Playground Love*, the single, is easily the most commercial track (and the only one with a vocal), but our fave is the seriously twisted *Suicide Underground* which features dialogue from the film. It's good stuff, but be warned: most of this short (40 min) album sounds like incidental music from a film. Funny, that. *WC*

WHAT'S SHENMUE?

For those who haven't been keeping up, here's a brief guide

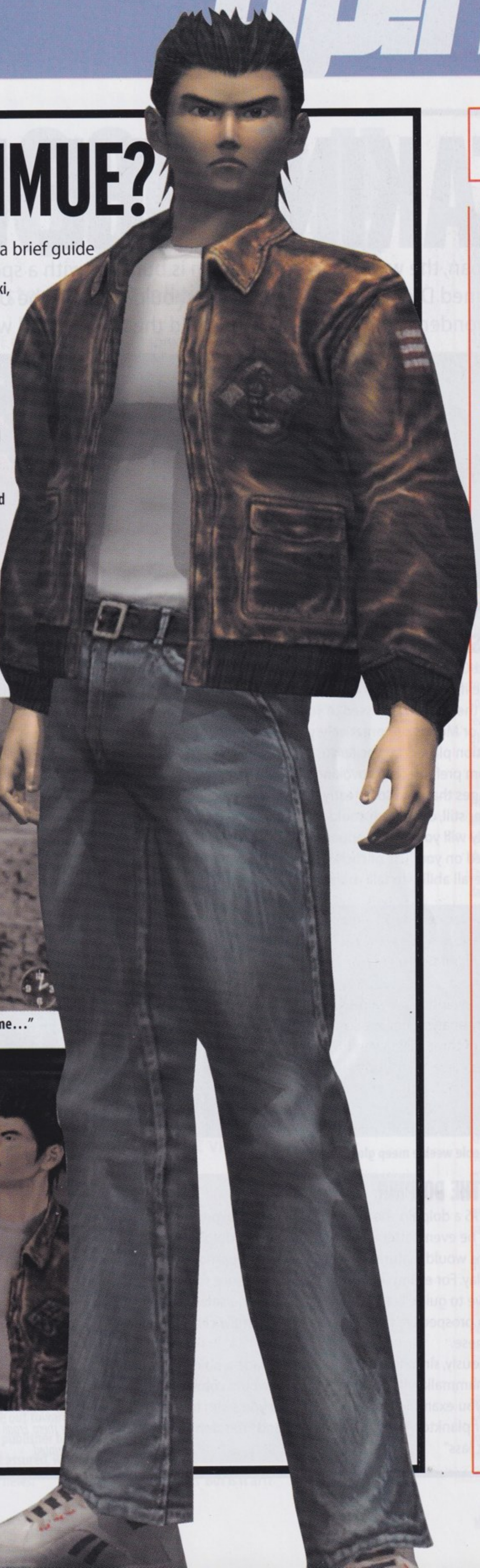
SHENMUE IS THE brainchild of famed Japanese developer Yu Suzuki, the man behind the *Virtua Fighter* series, *Virtua Racing*, *Outrun* and many other classics.

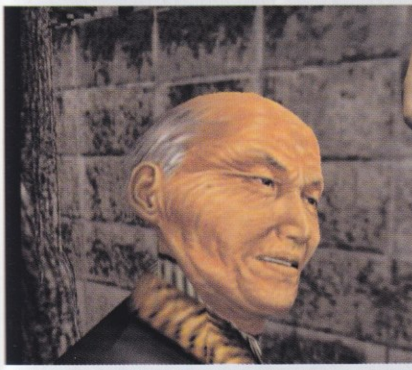
The game is the first of an entirely new genre that Suzuki has dubbed Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment, or FREE for short. It blends elements of role-playing games, beat 'em ups and action adventures to create a game world that's truly immersive.

With complex plot-driven gameplay, sumptuous graphics and sweeping camera pans, *Shenmue*'s production values owe more to cinematic epics than to traditional videogames.

The action takes place in both China and Japan circa 1986, and begins with the murder of your character Ryo's father. The epic quest that follows involves you finding out why he was killed and avenging his death.

The core of the game sees you exploring the environment and interacting with other characters from a third-person perspective. But that's all we're going to reveal for now. *Shenmue* is a story-driven title, and we really don't want to spoil it by giving extended plot and gameplay details.

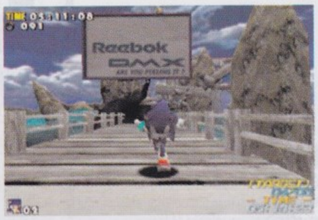




△ "I was a young man when they started working on this game..."

△ The best-looking product placement ever.

GAMES NEWS



CHESTER WIN!

Congratulations to Neil Riddaway of Chester for winning the inaugural European *Sonic Adventure* Speed Challenge, sponsored by Reebok. Neil was in second place behind Marco from Cognac in France for the last week or so of the six-week competition, but beat him by 0.05 sec with a winning time of 46.09 seconds posted just hours before the deadline. Full report next issue, on sale Thursday 9 March.

BIG IN JAPAN

Nearly a third of Dreamcast owners in Japan are said to be making use of the machine's Internet capabilities. With 500,000 users registered online, Sega have become the country's sixth-largest Internet service provider. Meanwhile, the company have just begun preliminary public tests on a cable modem service for Dreamcast owners in Japan.

LATE MESSIAH

The release date of Shiny Entertainment's innovative first-person shooter *Messiah* on PC – originally due in December – has been put back until March. The delay is expected to have a knock-on effect on the release of the Dreamcast conversion, which was tentatively scheduled in for a spring release. Naturally, we'll keep you posted.

OFF-ROAD RAGE

Rage software have released a few more details on *Off Road*, their, er, off-road buggy racer due in late summer. The fast-paced game will feature nine challenging tracks with a variety of environmental effects including snow and rain. Among the options will be a two-player split-screen mode. Watch out for a preview in *ODM* real soon.

FISHING WAIT

At the time of writing, *Sega Bass Fishing* (*ODM* #1, 7/10), originally due out way back in October, *still* hadn't reached UK stores. Sega tell us that they've had problems manufacturing enough of the fishing rod controllers which are to be bundled with the game. Apparently they've now enlisted the help of a third-party peripheral manufacturer, and the game should be on shelves "soon" priced around £54.99.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON VHS

HENRY FOOL
OUT FEB 21 • CERT 18 • £12.99

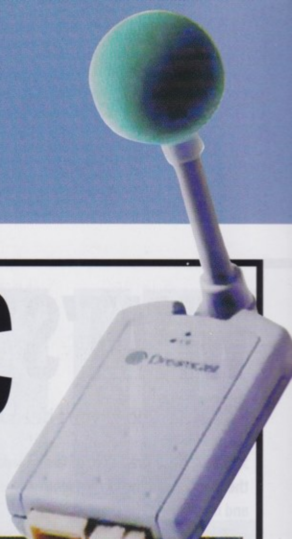
Wimpy garbage man Simon Grim, his manic-depressive mother and tarty sister's dull lives are turned upside-down when they discover beer-guzzling intellectual Henry Fool has taken residence in their basement. Henry thinks he's a brilliant writer and offers to teach Simon to express his feelings through words. When Henry's autobiography is turned down his over-inflated ego takes a kicking – and gets even more bruised when Simon's porno poetry is published on the Net. Funny, sad, bizarre but totally compelling tale with a haunting soundtrack. *CE*

URBAN LEGEND
OUT FEB 21 • CERT 18 • £12.99

After students get bumped off in peculiar ways, student Natalie (Alicia Witt) suspects somebody is replicating urban legends discussed in class. Journalist major Paul (Jared Leto) gets onto the case while class joker Damon (Joshua Jackson) does his best to wind her up – until he discovers that she's right. Prime suspect is their professor – played by none other than Robert "Freddy Kreuger" Englund. While not quite in the same league as *Scream*, this teen slasherfest makes you think twice about snogging in the car park late at night. *CE*

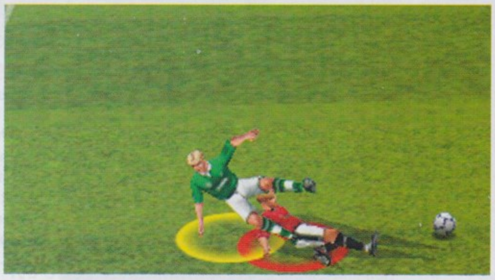
VARSITY BLUES
OUT FEB 14 • CERT 15 • TO RENT

In smalltown Texas football is religion, Head Coach Bud Kilmer (Jon Voight) is God and the West Canaan Coyotes are gunning for their 23rd division title. But a few games before the Final, the star quarterback sustains a knee-injury and Coach brings in second-string Mox (James Van der Beek). Trouble is Mox only plays because he has to, preferring to read Kurt Vonnegut novels. After winning a few games, Mox questions the cantankerous coach's ethics. Fast, funny, testosterone-fuelled comedy drama, a cut above the average high-school football flick. *CE*



TAKING THE MIC

In Japan, the weirdo pet sim *Seaman* is bundled with a specially-designed Dreamcast microphone. It should come to the UK one day but, we wondered, what other games could the mic be used with?



△ **"Posh Spice takes it up the... aaaargghhh!"**

UEFA STRIKER

FOOTBALL GAMES are crying out for microphone compatibility. Imagine if, as you make a darting run down the wing, you could call for the ball to be passed to you by Giggsy, Jonesey, Becksy, Decksy or Muggsy. Alternatively, you could wind up the opposition players by vociferously questioning their wife's bedroom preferences, provoking them into rash two-footed challenges that lead to an early bath.

Better still, one player could take on the role of commentator. Not only will your words appear in the game as Big Ron's, but you get rated on your use of clichés, accurate identification of players and overall ability to talk rubbish.

△ **"Weeble weeble meep gloop reeeoooowwww..."**

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

PLAYING AS a dolphin should be an interesting experience anyway, but it'd be even better if you could talk like a dolphin too. Special missions would feature vocalisation as a key part of the gameplay. For example, you'd have the Romance stage, where you have to guide Ecco into the undersea equivalent of Ritzy's, select a prospective mate and then successfully chat her up in dolphinese.

Obviously, since few gamers haven't made a point of studying aqua-mammalian languages, the game would come with a tape giving you examples of phrases like "Do you swim here often?", "Get yer plankton love, you've pulled" and "You don't sink much for a fat lass"

△ **"I didn't say you were fat... just cuddly!"**

READY 2 RUMBLE

OKAY, SO YOU can already taunt your opponents in *R2R*, but wouldn't it be great if you could create your own insults for each boxer? You could record the words using the mic, and then the game's speech-synthesis software would convert it into the voice of your chosen boxer.

The game could contain a database of keywords to assess which taunts are the most offensive. The best ones would make your opponents more angry, reducing their defences and disrupting their attacks. So, calling Afro Thunder a cissy wouldn't have much effect, but calling Salua Ta a big fat bastard who ate all the pies would send him berserk.

△ **"Ssshhhh... any sound and they'll... doh!"**

SEGA BASS FISHING

Everyone knows that fishermen need absolute quiet to do their work, so with the mic plugged in, you'd have to make sure everyone in the room you're playing in stays silent.

The game itself could feature small children running around on the banks chucking stones in the water. If you don't tell them to bugger off in suitably menacing tones, they'll scare all the fish away. Mic compatibility would also enable the inclusion of a post-fishing pub level, where you brag about the size of your catch.

• *Can you think of any innovative ways to use the Seaman microphone? If so, we want to hear them. Email us at the usual address, with the heading 'Mic Games'. The best ones will be printed.*

V-ROOOOOOOM!

Can Infogrames steal Sega's rallying crown?

MICHELIN
V-RALLY 2
CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION
sparco

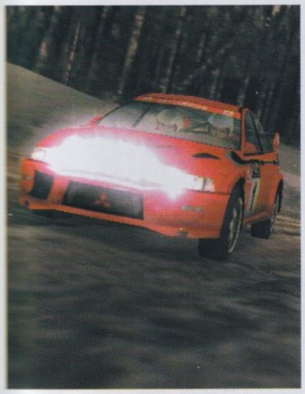
INFOGRAMES HAVE released full details on their upcoming *Dreamcast rallying game, V-Rally 2 Millennium Edition*.

Based on a PlayStation title released at the end of last year – but looking far, far superior – *V-Rally 2* is to feature 16 officially licensed cars from the 1999 World Rally series, as well as ten classic bonus cars.

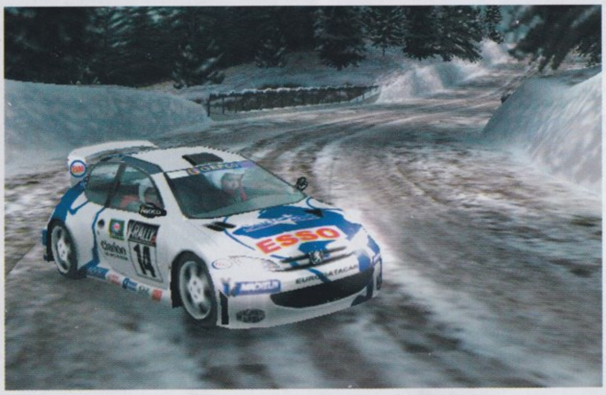
The game includes more than 300km of road, with 84 tracks and special stages spread across 12 different countries. A unique track editor and generator will also be provided.

Options will include arcade and championship modes, as you might expect, but also – get this – a four-player split-screen mode and a facility to save replays on a Visual Memory unit.

V-Rally 2 Millennium Edition is currently scheduled for release on May 10. Watch out for a full, in-depth preview of this hot-looking racer in next month's *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, on sale Thursday 9 March.



△ **A Mitsubishi. Definitely an *ODM* fave.**



△ **You can't see it here but the cars in *V-Rally 2* will show full crash damage. A good thing.**

IN IT FOR THE MONET

Art-theft action adventure promises original gameplay without violence

NORWICH-BASED Promethean Designs are developing an action-adventure that they claim will "offer the shooting satisfaction and character interaction of *Half-Life* combined with the gameplay of *GoldenEye*".

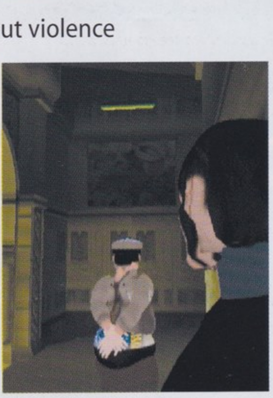
Picassio sees you take the role of a professional cat burglar working for one of two billionaire businessmen who are competing to assemble the world's finest art collection.

Your job, naturally enough, is to obtain (read: steal) treasures – everything from the Mona Lisa and The Scream to the Crown Jewels – from locations such as The Louvre and The Tate, and by any means necessary.

Completing missions will apparently require a combination of cat-like agility, reconnaissance, stealth, strategy and the cunning use of an inventory which includes micro cameras, lock picks, glass cutters and chewing gum.

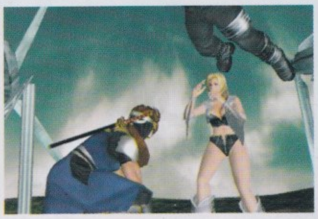
However, while weapons – including chloroform-soaked hankies, drug-tipped darts, stun guns and smoke bombs – can be used to disable security guards, killing is not an option. According to the developers, *Picassio* will be a "totally non-violent game".

Picassio is due out towards the end of the year although a publisher has yet to be announced. Rest assured, we'll keep you fully up-to-date with news.



△ **But is it art?**

GAMES NEWS



DOA2 FOURPLAY

Tecmo have confirmed that the Dreamcast edition of the keenly-anticipated arcade beat 'em up *Dead or Alive 2* will include the option for four players to fight simultaneously. It's due out in the US in March but UK publisher and release details have yet to be finalised. Expect more news on *DOA2* in the next issue of *ODM*, out Thursday 9 March.

POO-CHI POO-CHI POOH

Sega is launching a low-cost robot dog called Poo-chi in Japan on April 1. Priced 2,980 yen (around £18), the mechanical pet features optical and sonic sensors and will walk and talk (er, bark) in response to the owner's voice or touch. Unlike more sophisticated models, however, it has no facility to learn. The dog should eventually go on sale in the UK, via Tiger Electronics.

MARVELLOUS!

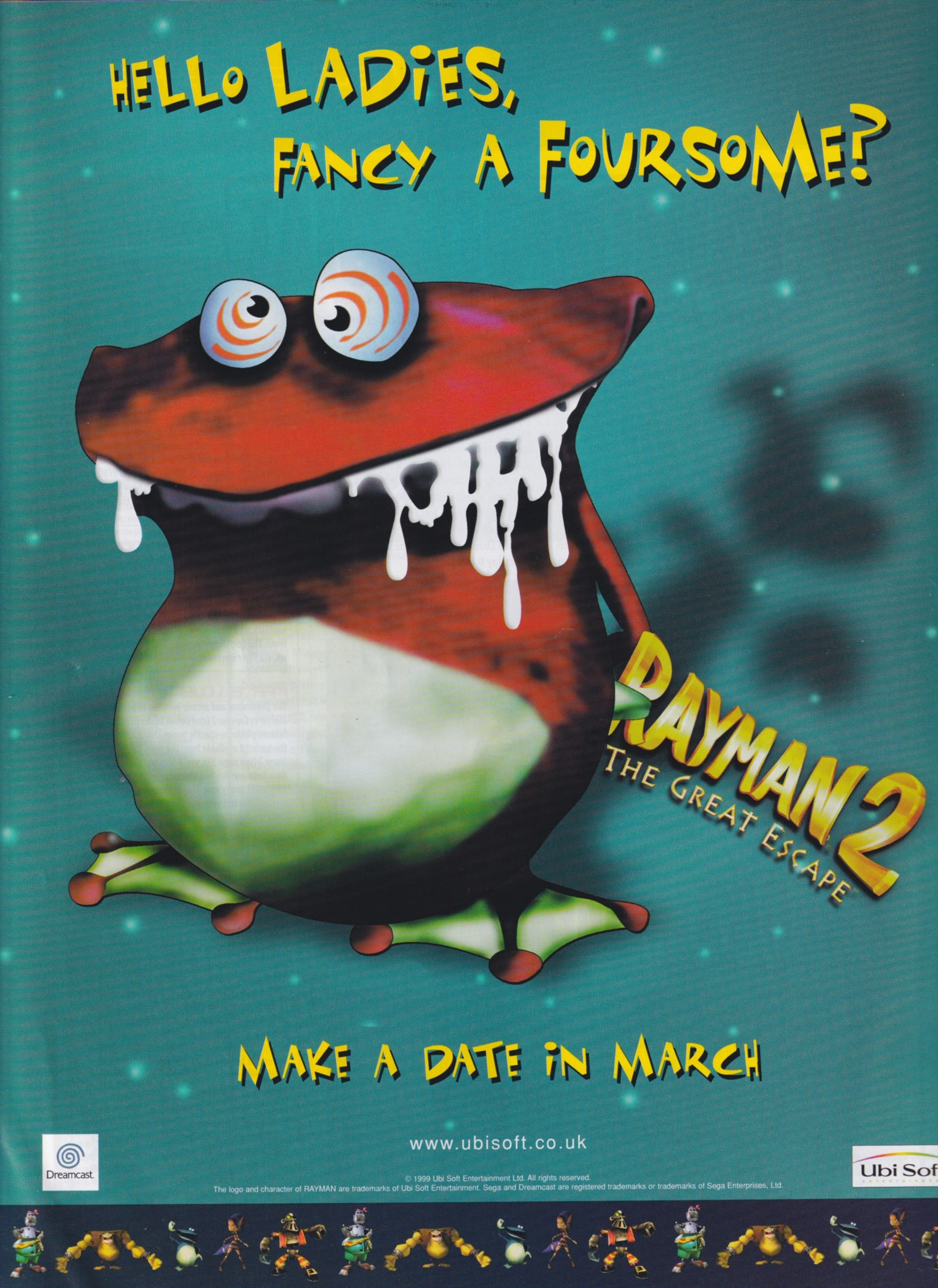
The Dreamcast and arcade versions of beat 'em up *Marvel vs Capcom 2* (due out in Japan in March), will feature platform-specific bonus characters beyond the basic 18 available from the start. Like *Power Stone 2* (see page 21), you'll also be able to share data between the two versions of the game by using a Visual Memory unit. There's no news yet on a UK release date but we'll keep you informed.

ACTUAL STRIKERS

Arsenal superstars Dennis Bergkamp and Thierry Henry posed for photographers at Arsenal's training ground in St Albans, for the launch of Sega's *Virtua Striker 2 v2000.1*. For the record, Bergkamp slotted away a hat-trick against Henry before giving the game his personal seal of approval. The game shot straight to number one in the Chart Track top 20 at the end of January (see page 32).

MAD FOR IT

Peripheral manufacturers Mad Catz and InterAct have signed a licensing agreement with Sega which will allow both companies to legitimately produce Dreamcast-compatible products including joypads, vibration units, light guns, memory cards, steering wheels, fishing rods and whatever else they can come up with. We'll be running a comprehensive round-up of DC peripherals in *ODM* real soon.


HELLO LADIES,
FANCY A FOURSOME?
RAYMAN 2
THE GREAT ESCAPE
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IS THAT A HEDGEHOG IN YOUR POCKET?

Sonic goes on the move with the Neo-Geo Pocket Color

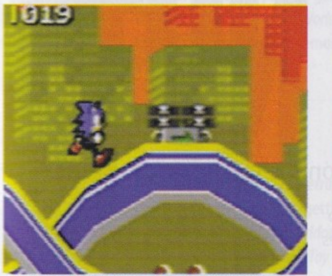
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG makes his first appearance on a non-Sega console with the release of *Sonic Pocket Adventure* on the Neo-Geo Pocket Color.

Based on the massively-successful 2D platform series, *Sonic Pocket Adventure* combines levels, enemies and ideas from all four 16-bit Megadrive titles.

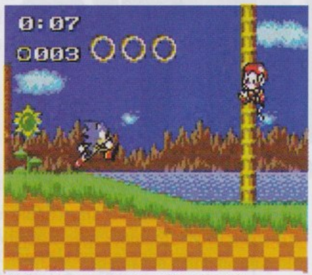
Brand new features include a savegame option which enables you to return to previously completed levels, and hidden jigsaw puzzle pieces which can be used to unlock secrets. When two Neo-Geo Pocket consoles are linked together, players can share best time trial scores or compete in two-player races.

Sonic Pocket Adventure looks, plays and feels just like the Megadrive classics that made Sonic such a worldwide celebrity in the first place. As we're the *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, we won't be reviewing it, but if we did we'd probably give it 8/10.

SPA is available on Neo-Geo Pocket Color from Friday 25 February priced around £24.99. The console costs £59.99.



△ **Sonic slips his Sega shackles. Smoothly.**



△ **Them pesky monkeys is back again.**

HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote for the Dreamcast games you're most looking forward to playing and you could grab yourself a free Visual Memory unit!

There are three trillion and one (approx) Dreamcast games in development around the world, but which ones are getting you most excited? Let us know and, courtesy of Sega, you could blag a VM unit (worth £19.99) for absolutely nowt.

To vote, simply email us at vote@dreamcastmag.co.uk using the subject heading 'Vote DC!' (no, not 'That vote thingy', James Handley of Willenhall). Please include, in order, a list of the five games you're most looking forward to (that's *five*, not three, Wayne Poppleton of Normanton), with the most keenly anticipated at the top. You must also include your name, age and full postal address (that includes you, Paul Braithwaite of,er, wherever). Note: these details will not be passed on to anyone else.

There are a couple of important rules: It doesn't matter if a release date for a game has yet to be set (they rarely are until the last minute), but you can only vote for games which have been *confirmed* as forthcoming Dreamcast releases (sorry, Mark Tranter of Bilston, but your vote for *Kingpin* was ignored).

There's no closing date, as this is an on-going competition with a winner drawn from the virtual hat each and every month. Only one entry from each reader will be accepted each calendar month. Anyone submitting more will be cursed in the office and disqualified from the competition forever (just like M Gilbert of Brighton). Note: For logistical reasons we can *only* accept votes by email.

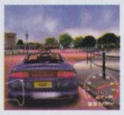
This month's lucky reader, chosen at random, is 19-year-old Steven Logan from Glasgow, whose selection was *NBA 2K*, *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, *Metropolis Street Racer*, *Grand Theft Auto 2* and *Crazy Taxi*. A Visual Memory unit is on its way, Steven. Thanks to everyone else who voted. Keep 'em coming, people.

YOUR MOST WANTED

THE DREAMCAST GAMES WHICH YOU, THE READERS, SIMPLY CAN'T WAIT TO PLAY

1 SHENMUE (SEGA)

Yep, it's still top – and by a long, long way. A staggering 46 per cent of readers who voted this month put *Shenmue* at the very top of their wanted lists, with – get this! – 87 per cent of you including it somewhere in your top five. See page 22 for the latest news on the game.



2 METROPOLIS STREET RACER (SEGA)

Up another place this month for Bizarre Creations' hot little racing number. Eleven per cent of voters named it as *the* most wanted Dreamcast game, and a mighty 65 per cent put it somewhere in their top five selections. Turn to page 46 for the latest developments.

3 CRAZY TAXI (SEGA)

Another game up a place on last month. 68 per cent of you voted for it (yes, a higher percentage than *MSR*), but only nine per cent of voters put it at the very top of the list. The release is now imminent, of course. Check out the review on page 66 to see if it lives up to the hype.

4 RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA (EIDOS)

Code: Veronica slips a couple of places this month. Fifty-nine per cent of you included it in your lists, and ten per cent put it in first place. No firm news yet on when we're likely to see it in the UK, but our money is on a May release. Expect more news soon in *ODM*.

5 SEGA GT (SEGA)

Thirty-four per cent voted for Sega's – here comes the cliché – *'Gran Turismo killer'*, but less than one per cent placed it first. *Sega GT* is due out in Japan any day now, but it still isn't showing up on UK release schedules. Rest assured we'll be following this one closely in the coming months.

6 HALF-LIFE (TBC)

Valve's masterpiece is undoubtedly the finest first-person shooter ever created, and we can't wait to see it on Dreamcast, er, sometime later this year. Thirty per cent of you voted for this, with around two per cent placing it top (*all* these percentages have been rounded up, by the way).

7 DEAD OR ALIVE 2 (TECMO)

This awesome-looking beat 'em up is due out in the US in March. Bizarrely, a European publisher (and release date) has still be announced, but we expect news soon. Seventeen per cent included this in their top five, with two per cent placing it first.

8 GTA 2 (TAKE 2)

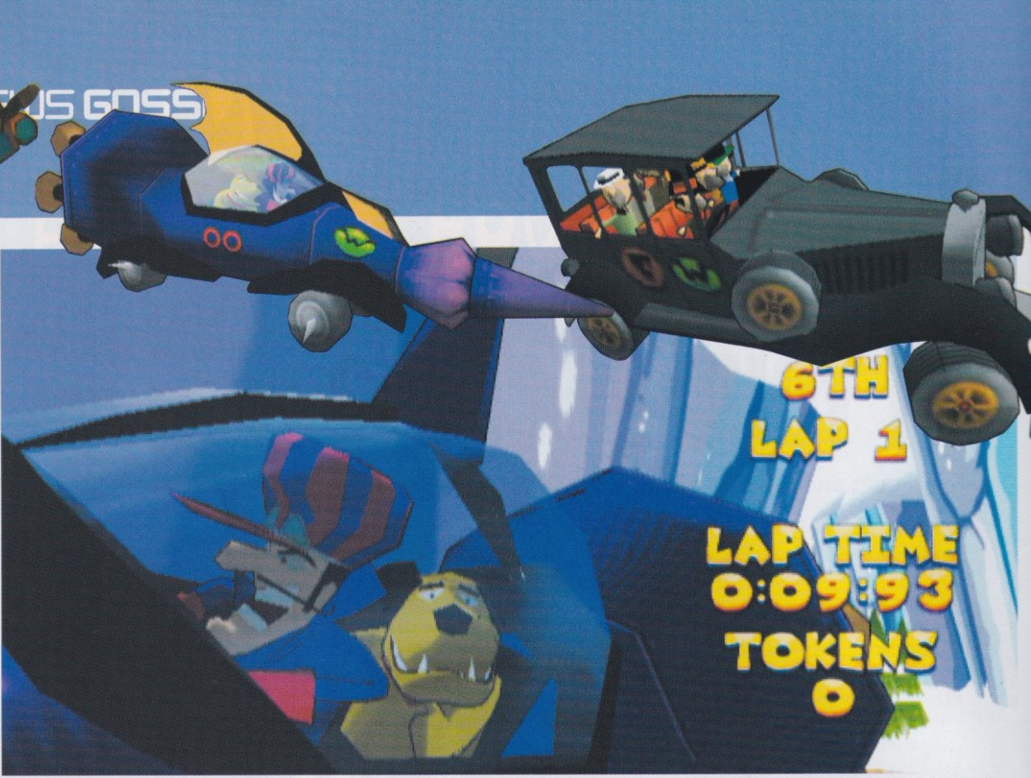
This controversial title – due out on Dreamcast before Easter, and previewed in full on page 42 – *Grand Theft Auto 2* should do well, we reckon. No one who voted this month put it at the very top of their pile, but 16 per cent of you included it in your top five.

9 D2 (TBC)

Twelve per cent put this in their top five. Interestingly, a couple of voters – no doubt fans of the excellent, but short, original – put it at the very top of their wish lists. As with *DOA2*, there's no news yet on a UK publisher or release date, but expect details real soon.

10 ECCO THE DOLPHIN (SEGA)

Ecco just – and we mean *just* – holds off *Zombie Revenge*, *Resident Evil 2* (reviewed last issue) and *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* for tenth place. Twelve per cent voted for it, but maybe it's not that surprising that nobody made it their first choice. Aw, poor Ecco is feeling a little unloved!



△ The Mean Machine with those double-dealing do-badders Dick Dastardly and Muttley. The rascals are always up to some dirty trick – and we love 'em for it.

DA MUTT'S NUTS?

Exclusive first screenshots of Infogrames' *Wacky Races*, based on the classic cartoon series

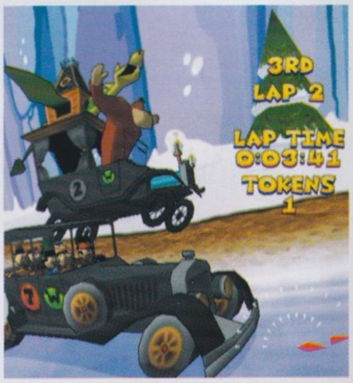
INFOGRAMES ARE BRINGING *Wacky Races* to Dreamcast this June and, as these screenshots – the very first released – show, it looks as if the company has perfectly captured the style of the classic Hanna-Barbera cartoon series.

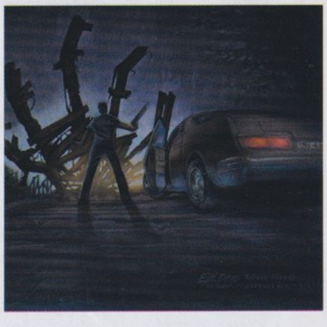
Official Dreamcast Magazine can exclusively reveal that the lead coder on the game is none other than Tony Crowther. One of the eighties' best-known programmers, Crowther was responsible for the classic Spectrum platform adventure *Monty Mole*, as well as titles such as *Blagger*, *Loco* and, more recently, the slick psychedelic shooter *N20*.

Wacky Races is a *Super Mario Kart*-style racing game, with each character able to use their vehicle's famous special abilities to gain an unfair advantage.

All the series' memorable characters will be available, including Dastardly and Muttley in the Mean Machine, Penelope Pitstop in the Pink Compact, and The Ant Hill Mob in the Bulletproof Bomb. Also included are a few we can't remember – Rufus Ruffcut and Sawtooth in a Buzzwagon, anyone?

We'll be following the development of *Wacky Races* closely, and hope to bring you a full preview soon. If everything goes to plan, it could turn out to be the ultimate in cartoon nostalgia.





THQ GET EVIL

Famous horror flick coming to Dreamcast

It might not be the most obvious of licensing deals, but Heavy Iron Studios are working on a real-time 3D adventure based on the X-rated horror film *Evil Dead*.

Set eight years after the last instalment of the movie trilogy, *Evil Dead: Ashes 2 Ashes* will see you assuming the role of Ash, the square-jawed, shot-gun-toting, chainsaw-armed hero from the movies. Publishers THQ promise lots of shocks, puzzle solving and gory action. No release date has been set, but it's expected to arrive sometime in the autumn.

Meanwhile, the company have also confirmed that they will be bringing a new, as yet untitled, WWF-licensed wrestling game to Dreamcast later on in the year, plus various MTV Sports-branded titles, the first of which is likely to be a skateboarding game.

THQ have, however, cancelled plans to release *Felony Pursuit* on Dreamcast (see News, *ODM* #1) due to technical difficulties.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON DVD

GO

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Doug '*Swingers*' Liman's excellent black comedy about a disastrous Christmas weekend in the lives of a group of LA slackers (and one Brit played by ex-*Grange Hill* star Desmond Askew) told from three different perspectives. Added to this witty and often nail-biting cocktail of drugs, sex, violence and cool dance tracks are 14 deleted sequences, behind-the-scenes interviews with cast and crew, music videos from No Doubt, Len and Philip Steir, filmographies and the usual theatrical trailer. Good stuff. *CE*

THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR

OUT FEB 28 • CERT 15 • £19.99

Pierce Brosnan and Rene Russo prove that you can still be deeply sexy in your mid-40s in this much-better-than-the-original remake of the 1968 Steve McQueen crime caper. Brosnan plays unfeasibly rich financier Crown who, for a laugh, steals a $100 million Monet, but he meets his match when ultra-sassy insurance investigator Russo is called in to retrieve it. Worth-it extras include commentary from the director, *The Making Of A Masterpiece* documentary and, um, a Sting video. *CE*

THE X-FILES MOVIE - SPECIAL EDITION

OUT NOW • CERT 15 • £19.99

Thirty-seven thousand years after something nasty was buried in an underground cave, a Texan lad inadvertently resurrects it. A few days later a bomb destroys a Dallas skyscraper. Mulder and Scully put two and two together and embark on a trail that takes them to a creepy secret installation deep in Antarctica. Even if you aren't an *X*-phile, this is a great film in its own right, and if you are then you'll be doubly made up by the commentary by Chris Carter and Rob Bowman and *The Making Of* documentary. *CE*

BACK ISSUES

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OCTOBER 1999

INSIDE: Beginner's guide to Dreamcast; spotlight on more than 55 upcoming games; the Grange Hill gang check out DC games

REVIEWS: *Sega Rally 2, Sonic Adventure, Speed Devils* and more

ON THE VIDEO: Exclusive footage of 35 future Dreamcast games

PRICE: £5.99

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NOVEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Exclusive *Shenmue* report; special report on the Tokyo Games show; Japanese gaming debate

REVIEWS: *Ready 2 Rumble, Power Stone, UEFA Striker* and more

ON THE DISK: Playable demos of *Sonic* and *Millennium Soldier*

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ISSUE #2

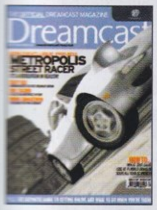
DECEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Extensive *Soul Calibur* review; the future for videogames; *House of the Dead 2* player's guide

REVIEWS: *Soul Calibur, F1 World Grand Prix, Marvel Vs Capcom* and more

ON THE DISK: Playable demos of *Dynamite Cop* and *Buggy Heat*

PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #3

JANUARY 2000

INSIDE: World exclusive *Metropolis Street Racer* preview; real life imitating games; guide to getting online

REVIEWS: *Worms Armageddon, Evolution, Shadow Man* and more

ON THE DISK: Brand new *Toy Commander* level; playable demos of *Snow Surfers, Suzuki Alstare* and *F1 World Grand Prix*

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ISSUE #4

FEBRUARY 2000

INSIDE: Exclusive *Code: Veronica* preview; violence in games; *UEFA Striker* and *Soul Calibur* tips guides

REVIEWS: *Virtua Striker 2 v2000.1, Resident Evil 2, Deadly Skies* & more

ON THE DISK: Playable demos of *Sega Worldwide Soccer* and *Re-Volt*

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THE DREAMCAST DOORSTEP CHALLENGE

YER NAME'S NOT DOWN...

Will Voldo's anaemic arse tempt our panel to bin their trusty PlayStation in favour of a gleaming new Dreamcast? **DAN TRENT** finds out

IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF out in the pubs of Willesden Green in north-west London, you'd better make sure you behave yourself. If the doormen put half the enthusiasm into their work that they put into their fighting games, you'll need to keep the peace or face the pummelling of a lifetime.

This area of London is famous for being a haven for Aussies, Kiwis and Springboks, and all our household this month (bar Jeff, a recent arrival from Florida) hail from various parts of South Africa.

Fighting games rule the roost in this gaff, and the faithful PlayStation has recently been kept busy with *Shao Lin*, while *Tekken 3* remains a firm favourite. "We've also been playing a lot of *FIFA* lately, so it's mainly football and fighting games here," says Jeff.

With a dedicated gang of beat 'em up fanatics in the house, *Soul Calibur* was bound to go down a storm, and according to Martinez it didn't fail to deliver: "Incredible graphics and amazing characters. We've been playing it solidly for days and still finding new stuff to do."

Jeff agrees: "It's the best fighting game I've ever played. The graphics are superb and it moves really fast, but it really annoys me that button pushers like Francois can still beat me!"

Francois himself remains unfazed by such accusations: "I was more impressed with *Snow Surfers*. I like the way you have to figure out the moves for yourself, it encourages you to experiment rather than just follow the manual. Although it's tricky to begin with, it's very rewarding when you get it right."

The sociable side of Dreamcast gaming was certainly a big bonus as far as this happy home goes. Jeff again: "If you don't have a PC, then the fact that you can do all the email and stuff is definitely cool. Most people just use their computer to surf the net, email and play games, and Dreamcast can do all that and costs a fraction of a PC."

Even PC-owning Andrew agrees: "The playability of the games is much better. Anyone can just come in, push buttons and win, and that means more people can get into it, but there's still the depth there for people who want to spend more time on it."

Overall, there's little doubt that this is one house that would be happy to trade up to the Dreamcast. As Jeff says: "There's nothing better than talking trash to each other when you're playing. And while I know there are people who like to just sit and play on their own, we like games to be more sociable, and Dreamcast is really geared towards that."

△ **South Africa versus the USA, three against one. The winner: Dreamcast – by a knockout.**

PERSONALITY TRAITS

JEFF ENOS
AGE: 22
OCCUPATION:
Musician and student
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME:
Soul Calibur
WOULD YOU SWAP YOUR PSX FOR THE DREAMCAST?
Yeah, I haven't completed *Soul Calibur* yet!

ANDREW CRAIG
AGE: 21
OCCUPATION:
Doorman
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME:
Soul Calibur
WOULD YOU SWAP YOUR PSX FOR THE DREAMCAST?
Yes, the general playability is so good.

MARTINEZ ESTERHUIZEN
AGE: 21
OCCUPATION:
Doorman supervisor
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME:
Soul Calibur
WOULD YOU SWAP YOUR PSX FOR THE DREAMCAST?
Definitely! I could hug all the guys who made the games!

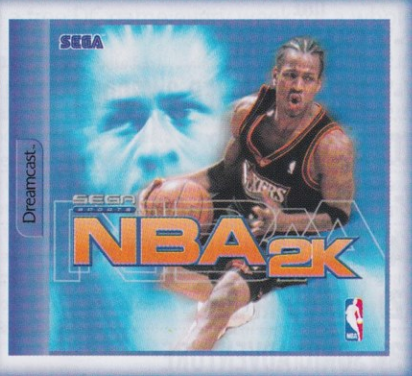
FRANCOIS LIEBENBERG
AGE: 28
OCCUPATION
Doorman
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME:
Snow Surfers
WOULD YOU SWAP YOUR PSX FOR THE DREAMCAST?
Yes. No doubt at all.

Calling all contestants... Have you got a friend who deserves to have us turning up on their doorstep when they least expect it? Someone who slags off your Dreamcast because they 'adore' their PlayStation or N64 so much? Want to really test your friend's resolve? Then drop us a line at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with 'Doorstep Challenge' in the subject line, or write to Doorstep Challenge, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. To qualify, contestants must have a PlayStation in full working order (it's the first thing we'll be checking when we turn up) and a minimum of five games.

HMV

seriouslyaddictive...

Dreamcast
CRAZY TAXI
SEGA



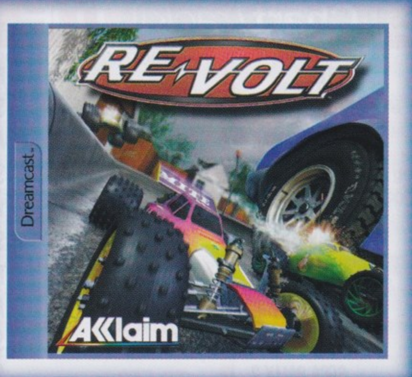
Crazy Taxi

Spend a day in the life of a mad American cab driver. Try to deliver as many customers as possible to their destinations within the time limit in this smash hit, DC enhanced, arcade conversion. Shortcuts over pavements, through parks and around the backstreets are highly recommended. The quicker you get there and the more exciting the ride, the higher the tip.

NBA 2K

The detail of the animation is amazing in this top basketball sim that includes 29 NBA teams with 400 individually modelled players, each with reactive expressions. As a licensed product, all the game and season statistics are here and the multiplayer mode supports up to four players. "Probably the best basketball sim in the world ever." DC UK

SEGA
Dreamcast
Virtua Striker 2
ver.2000.1



Virtua Striker 2

Play with up to 37 international teams in this perfect arcade conversion of the classic football title. The game has been enhanced from the coin-op version with a dazzling variety of modes including International Cups and Leagues with a huge range of different stadia. Favourite goals can be stored and are rated for their skill level.

Re-Volt

With 128 bit graphics, realistic r/c physics, great weapons and awesome environments, Re-Volt is a dream racer. Maraud in museums, trash toy stores, blast through botanical gardens, smash up supermarkets, blaze a trail through the Wild West, all at 300 scale mph. Your miniature arsenal will do massive damage.

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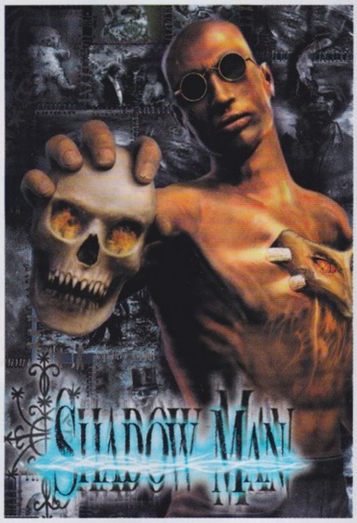
THE HMV TOP TEN

The ultimate guide to what's hot and what's not in the world of Dreamcast games on the streets of Great Britain

POS	LM	TITLE	PUBLISHER	ODM RATING	ISSUE
1	(-)	SHADOW MAN	ACCLAIM	6/10	3
2	(-)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA	7/10	4
3	(1)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
4	(-)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	7/10	1
5	(4)	READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA	9/10	1
6	(2)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
7	(3)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9/10	0
8	(7)	FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	3/10	4
9	(-)	TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM	7/10	1
10	(-)	SNOW SURFERS	SEGA	6/10	2



△ So, how does *Shadow Man* grab you?

THE ChartTrack TOP TWENTY

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER	ODM RATING	ISSUE
1	(-)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA	7/10	4
2	(1)	SHADOW MAN	ACCLAIM	6/10	3
3	(3)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
4	(2)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	7/10	1
5	(4)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9/10	0
6	(5)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
7	(8)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	3/10	2
8	(6)	READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA	9/10	1
9	(7)	SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA	8/10	0
10	(12)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	9/10	1
11	(19)	TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	CRAVE	5/10	3
12	(9)	FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	3/10	4
13	(17)	TOY COMMANDER	SEGA	8/10	1
14	(16)	SOUL FIGHTER	PIGGYBACK	6/10	2
15	(10)	TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM	7/10	1
16	(13)	SNOW SURFERS	SEGA	6/10	2
17	(15)	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	HASBRO	8/10	3
18	(14)	MARVEL VS. CAPCOM	VIRGIN	5/10	2
19	(11)	MONACO GRAND PRIX RS2	UBI SOFT	6/10	1
20	(-)	POWER STONE	EIDOS	8/10	1

UK sales for week ending 22nd January, 2000. Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 2000

△ Eat my Goal! Sega's *Virtua Striker 2* goes to the top.

CHART ANALYSIS

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 is one of those games you either love or hate (or, um, like a bit), but there's no denying that it's selling well. Aided by Sega's TV advertising campaign, it shot straight to number one.

Acclaim's action-adventure *Shadow Man* is not a big favourite here at *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, but is doing well nonetheless. Acclaim have three titles in the top 20 and would almost certainly have a couple more if they could get the much-delayed *Re-Volt* and *Tee Off* onto shelves.

Perhaps the biggest surprise in this chart is the lowly position of the excellent *Power Stone*, although the fact that it dropped out of the charts completely at one point suggests that there may have been supply problems. If you see it in stores, buy it – you won't be disappointed.

THE PLAYLIST

READERS OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* CAN NOW SAVE £5 OFF A GAME AT HMV. BUT WHAT WOULD WE BUY? THIS MONTH WARREN CHRISMAS PICKS HIS FAVES FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

1 POWER STONE (EIDOS)

Criminally underrated by our man Stuart (in my humble opinion), the stylish looking *Power Stone* is fast, frenetic and, most importantly, bloody good fun (especially in two-player mode), whether you're a novice or an expert. As such, I reckon it deserves a nine. Or a ten. An essential buy. (*ODM* #1, 8/10)

2 SOUL CALIBUR (SEGA)

Another must have game – if only so you can watch your friends' jaws drop to the ground when they first see it. This is arguably the best – certainly the best-looking – beat 'em up ever created. With loads of characters and secrets to unlock, it's also got some depth. Buy it and love it. (*ODM* #2, 10/10)

3 READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING (SEGA)

Some might consider it something of a surprise hit (pun intended), but spend three minutes in the ring and you'll see exactly why everyone loves this fun, over-the-top boxing game. Like the sport itself, it doesn't exactly require brains, but it's hugely entertaining nonetheless. (*ODM* #1, 9/10)

4 SONIC ADVENTURE (SEGA)

A stunning return for one of the world's best-known videogame characters. *Sonic Adventure* has the speed and playability of the 2D originals but thoroughly modern 3D graphics. The voice-overs are terrible and the camera positioning is dodgy at times, but this is fun, fun, fun. (*ODM* #0, 9/10)

5 TOY COMMANDER (SEGA)

This excellent mission-based shoot 'em up hasn't really had much coverage which is a shame because it's one of the most charming and original titles on DC to date. Only the multiplayer mode really disappoints. If you're looking for something a little different be sure to check it out. (*ODM* #1, 8/10)

6 HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 (SEGA)

A first-rate conversion of the arcade shooter, this is the ultimate stress reliever for those who have had a hard day at work or school. Beg, steal or borrow a second light-gun if you can, because it's excellent in two-player mode. And even better played with a gun in each hand. (*ODM* #1, 9/10)

7 UEFA STRIKER (INFOGRAMES)

I love footie games, and this is undoubtedly the best of the bunch on Dreamcast. Sadly though, while the presentation and speed is good, the gameplay has a few flaws. Most annoying feature? The way the goalies parry almost every bloody shot. Grrrr! (*ODM* #1, 8/10)

8 SEGA RALLY 2 (SEGA)

Another top-notch conversion of an excellent arcade game with a few Dreamcast-exclusive features (including a Ten Year Championship) thrown in for good measure. Nowhere near as ground-breaking as the original, but definitely Dreamcast's best racer to date. (ODM #0, 8/10)

9 SEGA BASS FISHING (SEGA)

On paper, virtual fishing sounds as dull as dish water, and in truth *Bass Fishing* is not much fun at all when played alone. But thanks in no small part to the inclusion of a fishing reel controller, this makes for an excellent party game. Hopefully it should appear in the UK sometime soon! (*ODM* #0, 7/10)

10 F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DC (SEGA)

A stunning-looking, officially-licensed formula one game with the kind of car set-up facilities and details usually reserved for heavyweight simulations on PCs. It's let down a little by a few bugs, but it's way, way better than *Monaco Grand Prix* and is a must for fans of the sport. (*ODM* #2, 8/10)

WIN A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF GAMES FROM HMV !!

Take home a free DC game every week for a whole year!

YES, YOU DID READ THAT RIGHT. Those fab people at HMV – the UK's premier retailer of music, videos and computer games – are offering the chance for one lucky reader to pick up a new Dreamcast game every single week for a whole year. That's 52 games worth over £2,000!

And the great thing is that *you* get to choose which game you want each week from HMV's massive stockroom, so nobody's going to fob you off with dozens of copies of, say, *Buggy Heat*.

This is your chance to get hold of games which you've missed out on and, of course, loads of hot new Dreamcast titles as and when they're released during the coming 12 months – *Metropolis Street Racer, Resident Evil Code: Veronica, Dead Or Alive 2*… whatever you want!

To be in with a chance of winning, all you have to do is answer the following multiple-choice question and send in the form below. So what are you waiting for, eh? Eh? Get writing.

THE BIG QUESTION: WHAT IS HMV SHORT FOR?

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c) HUGE MOTOR VEHICLES

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(offer valid for 90 days from date of purchase. account credits are not transferable. the offer is only applicable to the games listed below. no cash alternative shall be made available.)

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soul fighter £37.97
uefa striker £37.97
world wide soccer £37.97
ready 2 rumble £37.97
f1 grand prix £37.97

for just:

£70.00

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world wide soccer £37.97
ready 2 rumble £37.97
f1 grand prix £37.97
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sonic adventure £37.97
snow surfers £37.97
soul calibuer £37.97
mortal kombat gold £37.97
marvel vs capcom £37.97
re-volt £37.97
aerowings £37.97
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HMV

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* *Applies to full-price software only*

LETTERS

Got something to say? Don't keep it to yourself, share it with 50,000 other Dreamcast owners. This month: Sega gets into games, some handy Net tips and jobs in the industry…

OLD ROCKERS

Well, well, well. Who would believe it? Sega has again hired an ageing pop/rock star for one of their games. There I was, watching *TOTP2*, when a certain Long John Baldry appeared. I wasn't half surprised to see on the profile box that he is the voice of Dr Robotnik. All I need to know is whether it's *Sonic Adventure* he's in, or the cartoon series? If it's the cartoon, he's joined the ranks of Debbie Harry, and erm… Oh, that's all really.

David Holdsworth, via email

Decrepit bluesman Long John Baldry is indeed a voice 'artiste' responsible for several videogame characters. As to whether or not he's ever lent his gravelly larynx to Dr Robotnik, we don't know – but do you really care all that much?

9	(-)	TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM
10	(-)	SNOW SURFERS	SEGA

THE ChartTrack TOP TWEN

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	(-)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA
2	(1)	SHADOW MAN	ACCLAIM
3	(3)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA
4	(2)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN
5	(4)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA
6	(5)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES
7	(8)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM
8	(6)	READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA
9	(7)	SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA

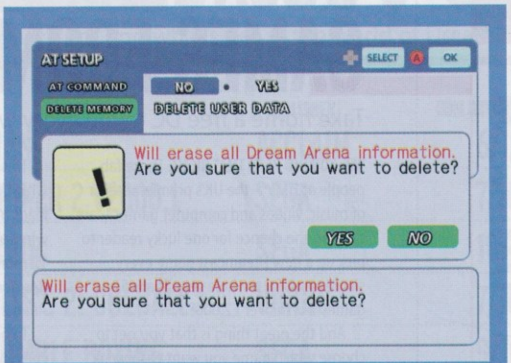
their CDs as GD-ROMs.

JOY DIVISION

I agree that the Dreamcast is an excellent piece of gaming hardware, but where are all the games for it? I have had little joy with the expensive title available and am disappointed with the slow release of others. I've ordered *Take The Bullet* but have been frustrated at the way the release date is constantly being pushed back.

Chris Turner, via email

It sounds to us like you're playing



Will erase all Dream Arena information.
Are you sure that you want to delete?

Will erase all Dream Arena information.
Are you sure that you want to delete?

PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Please can you tell me how to turn the Internet filter off on my Dreamcast as I can't find anywhere it allows me to do it.

Chris Noakes, via email

To disable the parental control, the DreamKey CD loaded, it will give you two options: Register Me and Restore Me. Choose Restore Me. You will be asked to enter your user name and password.

Once you've done this, your
appear on
he bottom of the
ll see a small box
hrough it which
ontent Filter.
ox to remove
Dreamcast will
to work without
control.

it isn't up to scratch then it is returned to developers with suggestions for improvements. And it's this process that protects us from the sort of bugged games that torment the PC.

STUPID YANKS

I've just been to the site www.videogames.com where some Americans were offering their opinions on Dreamcast games. I am appalled at their stupidity! They have decided that because they aren't

**the official Sega
ey have to put up
le piece of crap that
call itself a good gun,
e Dead 2 is a bad
ulous game and it's
wn because you live
try full of stupid
ir stupid laws about
uns to protect
ey didn't have guns,
eed protecting!**

Luke Mears, via email

HELP THE AGED

In *ODM* #3, you said in your preview of *Crazy Taxi* that the publisher was none other than 'Saga'. Now, I'm no brain-box but don't Saga do holidays for old people? After seeing this, I started to wonder what the game would be like if it was published by Saga. The special offer when buying it could be a supersonic hearing aid. And instead of getting a groovy yellow open-top taxi you'd have a beige Morris Minor. And as for the hair that drivers have in the screenshots, if it was published by Saga then you wouldn't be able to see any hair because a pork pie hat would always be in the way. Instead of taking hip and groovy youngsters to Tower Records, you'd take old wrinkly people to the local Mecca bingo hall, or to the spot where the old person's shopping dreams come true – Poundland. You could have mini games, where you first try to find a parking space, and then try to track down the Bingo Hall. For a four-player game you could have a street-race to try and get in the Bingo Hall first.

Mike Davies, via email

It'll never catch on, Mike.

PERIPHERAL VISION

I was re-reading your last issue and noticed you were stating the VGA adapter will not be available till the middle of next year. Well, I work for GAME and just wanted to inform you we currently stock a VGA adapter.

James Forrest, via email

Thanks for the info. Next issue we're running a round-up of peripherals from a range of companies. Be back here on March 9 for the full story.

SLICE HEADS REVISITED # 1

My earliest and fondest memory of a gory/violent game is *Nemesis The Warlock* for the Commodore 64. The game featured platforms set against a single colour background upon which you had to kill everything that moved and then find the exit to the next level – and so on. Largely overlooked for its time, you could shoot or hack with a sword, and the impact on the enemy would send a spray of blood as a zombie emerged! I regard this game highly because the violence was more satisfying, with blood and corpses creating a more involving atmosphere than the usual beep-beep-boop before the sprite vanished from the screen.

The Accident Man, via email

SLICE HEADS REVISITED # 2

I recall two games on the Megadrive that came under fire for their content. The first was *Zombies*, a weird game about two teenagers sucked into an over-zealous B-movie. The game had to change its name from *Zombie Ate My Neighbours*. The other was *Robocop Vs Terminator* which was slammed by the media and given a 15-certificate. And it was rubbish…

Ian Roberts, via email

SHORT BUT SWEET

Last week I was reading Teletext and the hot topic was *Shenmue*. They claim the PAL port of the game will be subtitled – is this correct?

Ewen McDougall, Newcastle

No details have been confirmed for the PAL version to date. The release is likely to be towards the end of 2000 in PAL countries.

Will there be a music creation game for Dreamcast? With the number of sound channels on Dreamcast it would be an amazing game.

Graham Jones, via email

There are no plans for Sega to publish a music creation game at the moment. Third-party developers may have plans but they are likely to wait until a hard-storage device is available so music can be stored.

Ever since the turn of the millennium whenever I switch off my Dreamcast my VM beeps and asks me to enter the date and time, just like it does when you first take it out of the box. It doesn't seem to be affecting my files.

James Duncan, Aberdeen, Scotland

It sounds like your batteries have run out. When your VM is plugged into the controller it draws its power from the Dreamcast, otherwise it takes its power from its internal battery. Always make sure you turn your VM off when you're not using it.

I'm off to the US in two months. I cannot get much Dreamcast stuff over here and I was thinking of buying some kit in the States. What can I buy and what I should avoid?

Colin McMaster, via email

Controllers should be fine – our Jap ones work in UK machines, and vice versa. US games won't work on UK consoles though.

I read the bloke's comment about language in the mag [*ODM* # 3] and totally disagree with him. The content is spot on.

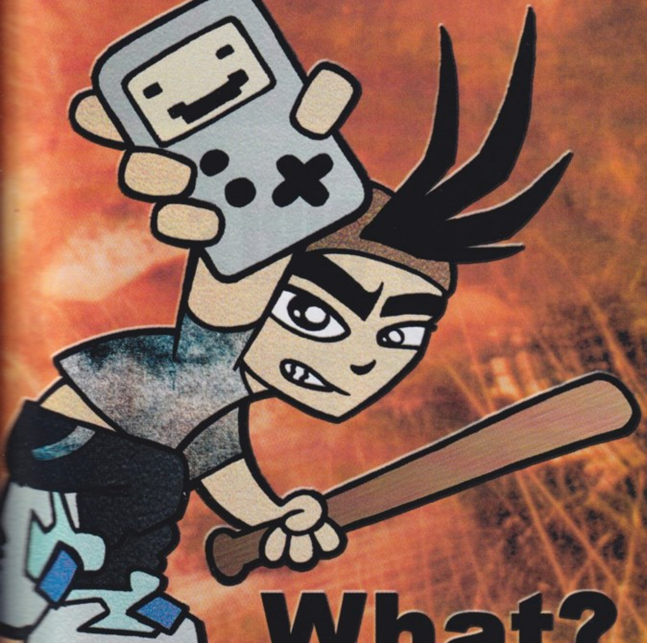
Masporne, via email

What qualifications do you need to become a game designer?

Matthew Glenns, via email

Good question. Next issue (out Thursday 9 March) we begin a series on jobs in the games industry, beginning with how to become a games tester.

CONTACT INFO: We want to hear from you. Address your letters to: Mailbox, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk. And if that's not good enough for you, why not contribute to our regular online chat forum – simply point your Web browser at www.dreamcastmag.co.uk (or click on the *ODM* button on the Dreamcast portal site) and follow the instructions.



What? No Poké-man?

so, you got the console but what about the games?
did aunt elly forget that you prefer beating the living
*%@! out of a six foot geek with a blond flat-top to
running, jumping, standing still?
or are you just an ardent player
looking for quality?

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Dreamcast

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(offer valid for 90 days from date of purchase. account credits are not transferable. the offer is only applicable to the games listed below. no cash alternative shall be made available.)

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ready 2 rumble	£37.97
f1 grand prix	£37.97
sega rally 2	£37.97
sonic adventure	£37.97
snow surfers	£37.97

or buy any two of the following games for just:

£70.00

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soul fighter	£37.97
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ready 2 rumble	£37.97
f1 grand prix	£37.97
sega rally 2	£37.97
sonic adventure	£37.97
snow surfers	£37.97
soul calibuer	£37.97
mortal kombat gold	£37.97
marvel vs capcom	£37.97
re-volt	£37.97
aerowings	£37.97
buggy heat	£37.97
sreet fighter a3	£37.97
trickstyle	£37.97
blue stinger	£37.97
armada	£37.97
nba 2000	£37.97
nfl blitz 2k	£37.97
power stone	£37.97
house of the dead 2	£37.97
crazy taxi	£37.97

how to place your order:
by telephone (0208 776 5031) or by fax (0208 776 5032) between 9am - 7pm monday to friday and saturdays 10am - 4pm. by cheque, cash (please send by recorded delivery, for your own safety) or by postal order made payable to: gamecast, 5 champion road, london se26 4hd. or by email: orders@gamecastuk.com please phone for full details of our product range. free first class postal delivery to all uk customers. e&oe. prices are subject to change without notice. all prices include vat. next day and european deliveries available. immediate cheque clearance by: TRANSAX upon request.

tel: 0208 776 5031 fax: 0208 776 5032 email: orders@gamecastuk.com

TOYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS...

Look at these pages carefully. Are you suddenly struck by the urge to take pictures underwater and secretly record people's conversations? Don't fret, that's just our gizmo mojo at work

Canon
IXUS X-1
CANON LENS

CANON IXUS X-1

Some great crimes have been committed in the name of 'waterproof'. How vital, for example, is a waterproof sunglasses case? And who ever got much use from their waterproof Walkman? At least with cameras, like this Canon IXUS X-1, they have the excuse that the very features designed for use underwater – large viewfinders and chunky, simple controls – make them a joy to use for landlubbers too. This addition dumps the polished metal look in favour of a tough, translucent plastic case that has all the features you need and protects it from knocks that would trash its fancier cousins. As you'd expect, the picture quality is excellent.

Price £129.99 from Canon: 0800 616 417/www.canon.co.uk

MIC
ERASE
REC

SILENCIO DIGI-PEN XR-70

"Now pay attention, 007..." Hi-tech surveillance kit that would have been the stuff of Bond a few years ago is now available on the High Street. It doesn't come cheap, but those with a need to find out what others are talking about can choose from an array of hi-tech devices. Many are smaller than the Silencio pen, but none are more convenient. It doesn't require a receiver, and can record through clothing, so pop it in your inside pocket and off you go. For those with innocent motives the pen operates as a dictaphone which records with digital quality and can download straight to a PC.

Price £295 from No Hiding Place: 0208 343 2222/ www.nohidinglabs.com

C40 AIRGUN

Fancy yourself as Leon from *Resident Evil 2*? While finding zombies to perforate may prove tricky, this rather serious-looking airgun will at least ensure you look the part. In fact, it looks so convincing that you'd be advised to be extremely careful about where you wave it around, as police armed response teams have a notoriously bad sense of humour when it comes to replica guns. Suffice to say that this is no Nerf gun, and the optional Terminator-style laser sight turns it into a very scary-looking device. Gas powered and boasting an eight round clip, the local squirrel population had better run for cover, cos tin cans just aren't much of a challenge to hit anymore.

Price £119 (laser sight £89) from Boysstuff: 01902 861 818/www.boysstuff.co.uk

WATCH THIS!
HOT NET ACTION

PHONEBASHING
SOLID GOLD CHART BUSTERS

PHONEBASHING

www.phonebashing.com

If train carriages full of chirping phones and gossiping mobile users piss you off, then the news that a militant gang of phone-haters are taking the war against phones onto the street will be welcome. That they dress up as phones and gleefully record themselves snatching phones off unsuspecting members of the public will certainly bring a glow of satisfaction. The sight of grown men running around dressed as phones is definitely worth a look. ***DT***

TV GO HOME

www.tvgohome.com

Definitely not one for those easily shocked by gratuitously offensive content, TV Go Home is a brutal reworking of the ***Radio Times*** **with a level of content that makes** ***Loaded's*** **fake listings seem tame. Programmes such as** ***Fatal Police, Camera, Action!*** **and** ***When Animals Are Goaded With Sticks*** **share the schedules with other more twisted offerings that will have you laughing and/or feeling a little queasy. Updated every two weeks this is definitely one to bookmark if you like your humour the dark side.** ***DT***

Football365

FOOTBALL 365

www.football365.com

If the recent crop of footie titles on Dreamcast haven't quite done it for you and you need your faith in the beautiful game restoring, check out this huge and well-informed site. Regularly updated news and features, live commentary from selected games and comprehensive stats are all on hand. If you need to keep abreast of your team's progress, you can have 365 mail you every time there's a story about your club or just when there's an exciting news flash. Down-to-earth and enthusiastically written, this is an essential site for all footie fanatics. ***DT***

SONY DIGITAL PHOTO FRAME

Okay, so it's the 21st century. The conventional camera is dead and the digital camera rules the roost. All very well, but how are you going to actually display that expertly manipulated photo of your head grafted onto Arnie's body to impress the ladies? Like this: simply download the pictures on to the Sony memory stick and load them into this rather flash-looking picture frame. It shows one picture at a time, and you can scroll through a set or even play MPEG movies on it. It even keeps you in your other half's good books – load your favourite picture for when she's round; switch to the shot of the babe you met on holiday when she's not. Result! Just don't forget to switch it back later.

Price £700 from Sony: 0990 111999/www.sony-europe.com

NOKIA
NOKIA
Menu
Names

NOKIA 7110E

These days it's not whether you've got a mobile or not that marks you out as a mover and shaker, it's the handset you choose that says it all. As pioneers of the phone as a fashion item, Nokia have a huge reputation to maintain. The 7110 is one of the first of a new generation of mobiles compatible with the stripped-down internet format known as MMM (Mobile Multi Media), otherwise known as WAP. The larger screen can be used to display all manner of useful information like cinema listings, news and email, and the phone features all the usual stuff you'd expect from a high-end handset. What's more, the *Matrix*-style spring loaded cover is every bit as satisfying as you'd hope.

Price £variable from Nokia: 0990 003110/ www.nokia.com and www.orange.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

PHOTOGRAPHY: **TANYA CHALKIN** IMAGE DESTRUCTION: **ADAM HAYES**

DIFFERENT BALL GAME

PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALLER MICHAEL BALL EARNS HIS CRUST PLAYING GAMES FOR EVERTON. SO WHAT DOES HE DO FOR FUN? PLAY GAMES, OF COURSE…

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM dictates that the bulk of a professional footballer's spare time is spent either traipsing round a golf course or hunched in Ladbrokes betting through the card at Monmore and Hackney. Not so Everton's young defender Michael Ball, who would much rather be knocking seven bells out of a team-mate at *Ready 2 Rumble*, or honing his virtual football skills on *UEFA Striker*. At just 20, Michael has numerous first-team appearances to his name, and is an England Under-21 international. Kevin Keegan even gave him a place on the bench for the senior side in last year's friendly against Hungary.

While he might not be the most famous Michael plying his trade on Merseyside, he is at least playing for the right team. For any kid growing up in Liverpool, the choice is simple: red or blue. For Michael it was "always Everton. Always. Me dad, all me family's Evertonians. Me first game I was three years old. I didn't really miss any – hardly any – home games for about ten or 12 years."

While football teams – and Everton in particular – have their ups and downs, one thing stays the same: the amount of leisure time players have at their disposal. As Michael says: "Footballers have a lot of money, they've got a lot of time to spend, and I'm not really a golfing fan. I tried to get into golf a couple of times but it's not really my game. I don't really like it. It spoils a walk, for me, to be honest."

Apart from a bit of snooker or darts, Michael's main pastime by far is playing videogames, and on away trips he and room-mate Richard Dunne take it in turns to bring their Dreamcasts.

Michael explains: "I had a PlayStation at first and I didn't like it. I gave that to me brother. I just couldn't get into it. Then the Dreamcast came along. It looked a good console, so as soon as it come out I ran out to the shops and bought it."

In fact he's so impressed with it that he's just had it installed in his… *car*?

"I've got TV screens in the back of the headrests in the jeep. It's a neat little toy thing for me. I'm crazy on little gadgets and things."

As for his favourite games: "*Ready 2 Rumble*. And *NBA Showtime*. I've had a bit of fun with mates with that one, with the different types of moves you can do. It's been quite funny."

Of the current crop of football games, Michael rates *UEFA Striker* as the best: "You can do proper football moves in it, like your tactics and all that kind of stuff. I like the passing type of games, but I can never score. I can never score in any footie game. Every time I play Dunney I always get caught on the break, and he scores. His keeper seems unbelievable. Or maybe it's just that I don't know how to score. The only thing I do in *UEFA* is the training, trying to get me coaching badge. That's what I like about that game."

What about *WorldWide Soccer*?

"I like all the options you get. You know, like you can pick any team virtually in the world, can't you?"

You can indeed. And *Virtua Striker*?

"The players are good on it, but it seems to be too slow and I can't win on that. Even Dunney couldn't win on that game. The computer's too good. There's not enough buttons on it I don't think… There's just, like, pass, shoot and tackle. On *UEFA Striker* and *WorldWide* you had the through-ball pass, and you can change to which man you want and the marking and all this. It's difficult, but when you get the hang of the controls you feel better about yourself.

"I haven't really played *Virtua*. I just looked at it, and 'cos it was too slow I didn't have the patience to play it; I wanted to get back onto *UEFA Striker* and practice free-kicks. I kept getting sent off in *Virtua* as well. It was doing me head in. I couldn't tackle anyone so I got a right cob on with that game."

So does being a Premiership footballer offer any advantage when playing games?

"It does on *UEFA Striker*, for me, because you're passing and moving and you can see the whole pitch."

Overall, then?

"*UEFA* about eight and a half to nine out of ten, *WorldWide* about seven out of ten, and *Virtua*… six."

Well, he may earn more in a week than we get a year, but in the unlikely event Michael Ball gets bored of his own job, it's good to know he can can do ours…

Steve Hill

> "I KEPT GETTING SENT OFF IN *VIRTUA*. IT WAS DOING MY HEAD IN! I GOT A RIGHT COB ON WITH THAT GAME"

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Lara Croft. Coming to Sega's Dream Machine? Get outa here! **RICHIE SHOEMAKER** gets the low-down

PRACTICALLY EVERYONE HAS HEARD of Lara Croft. She's done books, an album, TV ads, Sunday supplements, Penthouse… She's been there, done that, T-shirt or no T-shirt – if not her, someone who is paid to *be* her. She's the First Lady of cyberspace; a virtual meat puppet to which innumerable thousands thrash themselves blind. More importantly, Lara is the star of four *Tomb Raider* titles, the biggest-selling computer game series in the history of the world. Not bad for someone who, like Santa Claus, isn't real.

The most recent in the *Tomb Raider* saga, *The Last Revelation*, is coming to Dreamcast in March. Yes, *March*. And no, no one told *us,* either.

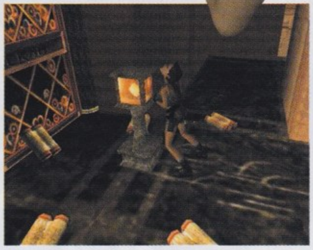
That's the thing with developers: either you're left hanging for years with just screenshots to keep you going, or the project is shrouded in secrecy until the last minute, as was this. Rumour has it that even Lara herself was kept in the dark. But we won't dwell on that.

Although she's done the rounds on PC, Lara is to most people a PlayStation starlet. Those too young to know better may well see her Dreamcast debut as something of a betrayal, but Sega and Lara are old muckers, the Croft original having been something of a hit on the old Saturn before it went curly toed and started slumming around car boot sales.

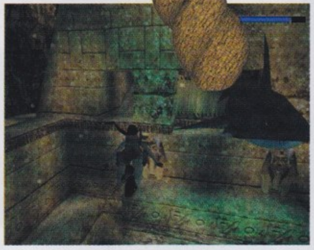
"The first *Tomb Raider* was a cutting-edge game at the time," says Susie Hamilton, Core Design's resident Lara historian. "The fact that it starred a female protagonist was very unusual. Lara was portrayed as an attractive, pistol-packing heroine. But it wasn't just her physical appearance that was of interest, it was also her no-nonsense attitude, independence, determination and genuine love of adventure. Another element to contribute to the success was the fact that the whole Girl Power thing was happening at the time *Tomb Raider* came out. We were lucky with the timing in many respects."

Point taken. But one can't help wonder that had *Tomb Raider*'s star been a male one, perhaps packing a whip, wearing a fedora and calling himself Idaho Smith, would the game have caught on in quite the same way?

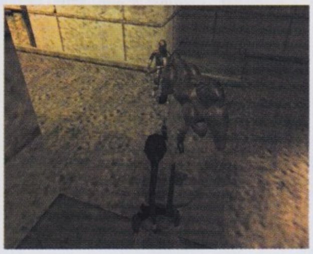
"I'm sure they would," maintains Susie. "But it's really hard to account for the percentage of people who'd buy a game on the strength of the hero or heroine. The two factors are inextricable



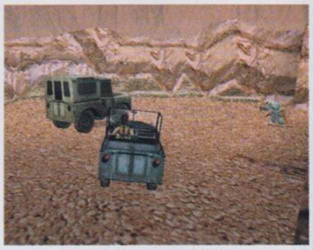
△ She makes Indiana Jones look like Tony Robinson.



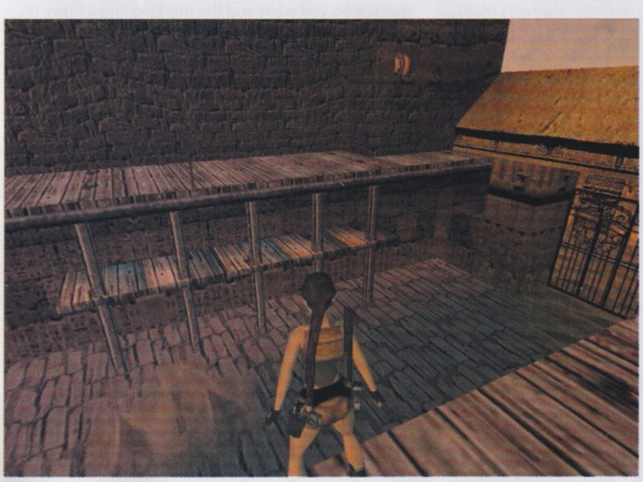
△ The lighting effects look amazing.



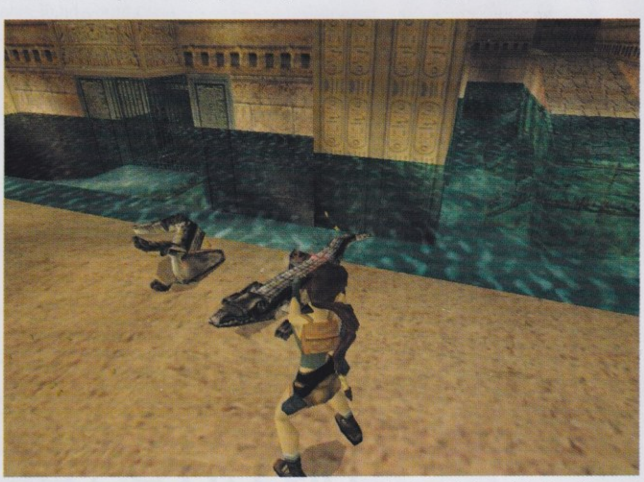
△ The bronze knight is a tricky chap to dislodge.



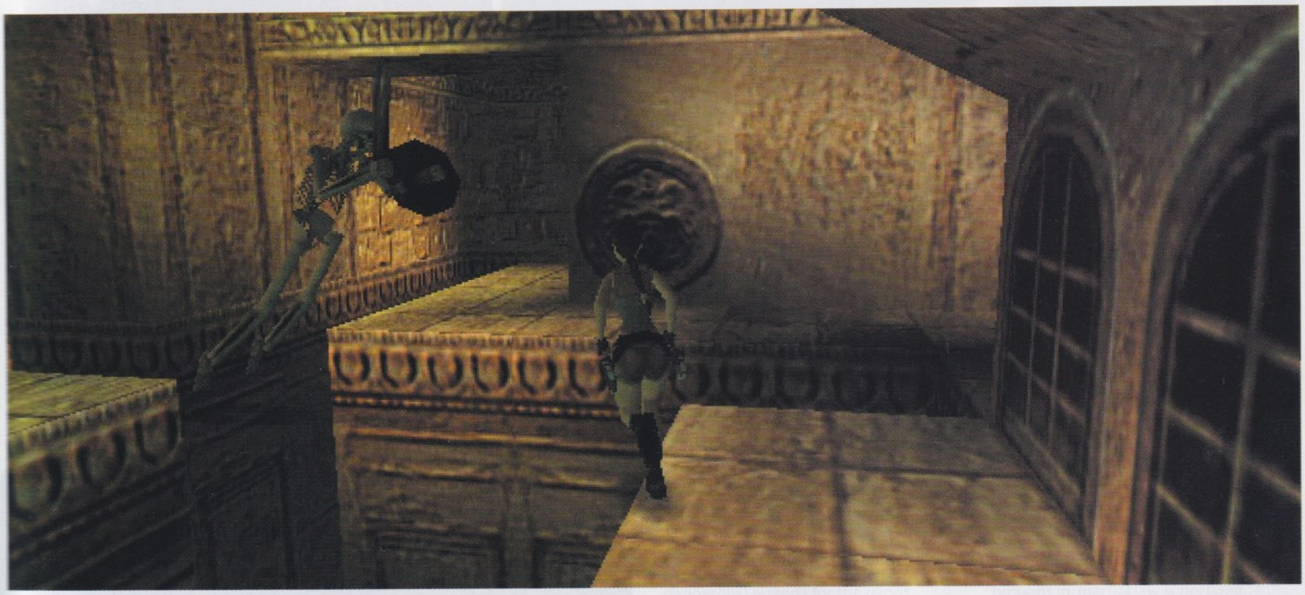
△ "'You couldn't pop into Tesco's on the way home?"



△ Okay, so she does have a few animals to kill. It wouldn't be *Tomb Raider* if she didn't.



△ You can't see them here, but all the characters in the DC version have full dynamic shadow effects.



△ Looks like Lara will go for any old bag of bones these days.

– it has to be a 50-50 thing, I guess: great game, strong character. The fact that the majority of players are male obviously has to be taken into consideration, but I doubt the average fan would be prepared to keep buying the sequels purely to see Lara again."

BACK TO BASICS

Having missed out on two sequels, then, *Tomb Raider* is about to come full circle, back into the loving arms of Sega. Did they miss anything? Some say not. For many *Tomb Raider* fans, *II* and *III* were too far removed from the original game. With not enough tombs, and more about running than raiding, "*Tomb Raider II* and *III* were both clear departures from the original game," admits Core Design manager Adrian Smith. "*Tomb Raider III* was a little complicated and perhaps a little disjointed, so by the time we were ready to start *The Last Revelation* the general consensus here at Core – and also from a large percentage of fans – was that Lara should go back to her roots and concentrate on some hardcore tomb raiding. We wanted to try to capture some of the atmosphere that the first game created so well. Of course, we realised that we would never be able to recreate the impact of the first game, but we were anxious to return to the original philosophy."

Set solely in Egypt, *The Last Revelation* is probably more of a sequel than its two predecessors ever were. In it, Lara is exploring an ancient tomb when she unwittingly goes and resurrects Set, an evil Egyptian god whose main skill lies in raising the dead. Unlike previous outings, then, Ms Croft's foes aren't so much endangered as decomposing. Consequently, some, like the skeleton warriors, require more thought than firepower to dispatch. The levels, far from being the ponderous, sprawling environments we might have had to content with in recent years, are tighter, less level-based and given more of an epic adventure feel.

Other noteworthy touches are the new vehicles. Obviously running around darkened tombs all the time would have most people clawing at the walls, so Core have cleverly given Lara a couple of vehicles to get about in. Lara also has new hip-swinging moves: she crawls, rappels up and down ropes, and for those of you with trouble sleeping she's visibly wet on climbing out of water.

All this, however, most of you will know. The truth is that, great game though it was, *The Last Revelation* hardly pushed the boundaries on PC. What we want to know is, what's new in the Dreamcast translation?

"In its overall speed, effects, sound and draw distance, the Dreamcast version will be superior," says Adrain. "Dreamcast is a very 'open' machine to develop for. The team here are really getting to grips with its power, and by utilising Sega's tools and libraries we feel that we can really harness its potential. We'll be able to implement brand new ideas without as many restrictions as some of the current consoles, and we might try something special, like some special downloads. The potential certainly exists, but we have to take it one step at a time!"

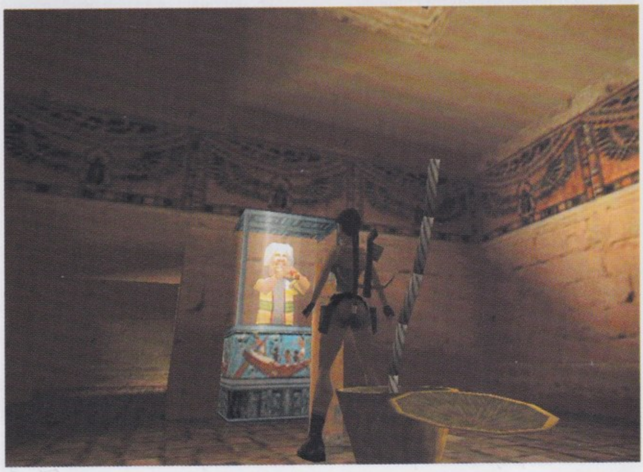
"THIS WAS TO BE THE LAST NEW *TOMB RAIDER*"

Currently there are no plans to bring either *Tomb Raider II* or *III* to DC (which is just as well, since we've just slagged them both off), but you never know with these guys. Core Design obviously enjoy springing a few surprises.

"We had only anticipated *Tomb Raider* being a trilogy, but clear public demand resulted in the fourth," says Adrain. "This was to be the last new *Tomb Raider* title for existing hardware. Plans beyond a fourth game remain unconfirmed."

If that doesn't scream *Tomb Raider V* for Christmas 2000, then we don't know what does.

OUT: **MARCH**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **CORE DESIGN**



△ Lara visits the great library of Alexandria.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

STILL THINK CRIME DOESN'T PAY? TAKE 2'S NEW RELEASE WILL SHOW YOU THE ERROR OF YOUR WAYS. **STUART DREDGE** INVESTIGATES

***GRAND THEFT AUTO 2* IS SICK.** It's one of those amoral videogames that promotes vicious criminal acts, drug abuse, aggressive behaviour, compulsive car-jacking and extremely foul language. If you play it, in no time you'll be pushing over old grannies, picking on small children, threatening people with guns, casually murdering complete strangers and blowing up small villages. This sort of filth should be banned from… hang on, it's all gone a bit tabloid. Rewind a bit…

Grand Theft Auto 2 is great. It's one of those games that refuses to patronise its audience by pretending we don't all secretly fancy a life of crime, if only in a 'virtual world'. Within minutes of loading it up, you can be tearing round the streets running errands for criminal gangs, most of them involving violence or lawbreaking of some kind. You may even find yourself casually murdering complete strangers. In fact, you'll be positively rewarded for it. If you ask us, this sort of thing should be encouraged.

Okay, the original *GTA* generated oodles of knee-jerk criticism in the mainstream press, which naturally led to sky-high sales. A sequel was inevitable, and duly arrived at the tail-end of last year on PC and PlayStation.

Before Christmas, it was announced Take 2 would be bringing it to Dreamcast, and ever since, we've been itching to find out more details. The port is being handled by Liquid Games, part of original developer DMA Design. We talked to the project's head producer Gary Foreman on how it's gone.

But first, the story. *GTA2* is set "three weeks into the future", with the game taking place in an unnamed city where seven gangs are scrapping it out for dominance on the streets. The crime rate is soaring, most of the population are out of their heads on strong drugs, pollution is rife and the police are totally useless. Much like Croydon, in other words.

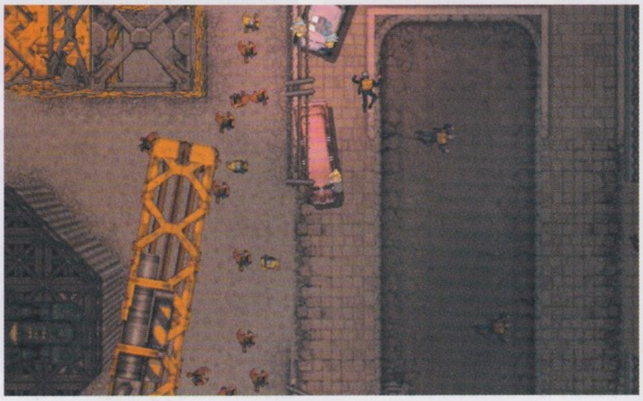
PUNK REVIVAL

So where do you fit into this pit of urban deprivation? The game sees you start as a jumped up punk – no, not the mohican and bondage trousers kind – who wants to rise through the ranks of the criminal underworld to kingpin status. Still, when you start, you're an unknown quantity, so you need to prove yourself to the bigshots.

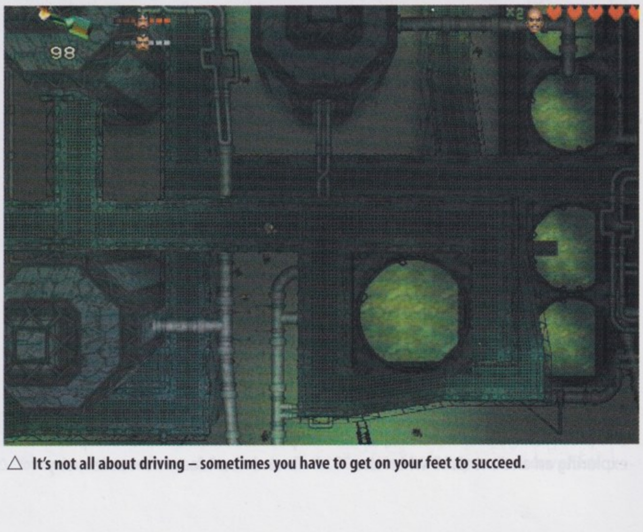
Most of you will already be aware of the basic idea of the game, but just in case, here's a brief summary. You drive around the city running errands for the various gangs, aiming to get into their good books and secure more highly paid work. Along the way, you have to stay out of the grips of the law, weak though it is. After all, the police can call on special agents and even the army if necessary.

The city is divided into three sectors: Downtown, Residential and Industrial, with the seven gangs dispersed between them. Each gang has its own 'patch', meaning you always have to be aware of your position in the city, to avoid a nasty encounter with any gang that's hostile to you.

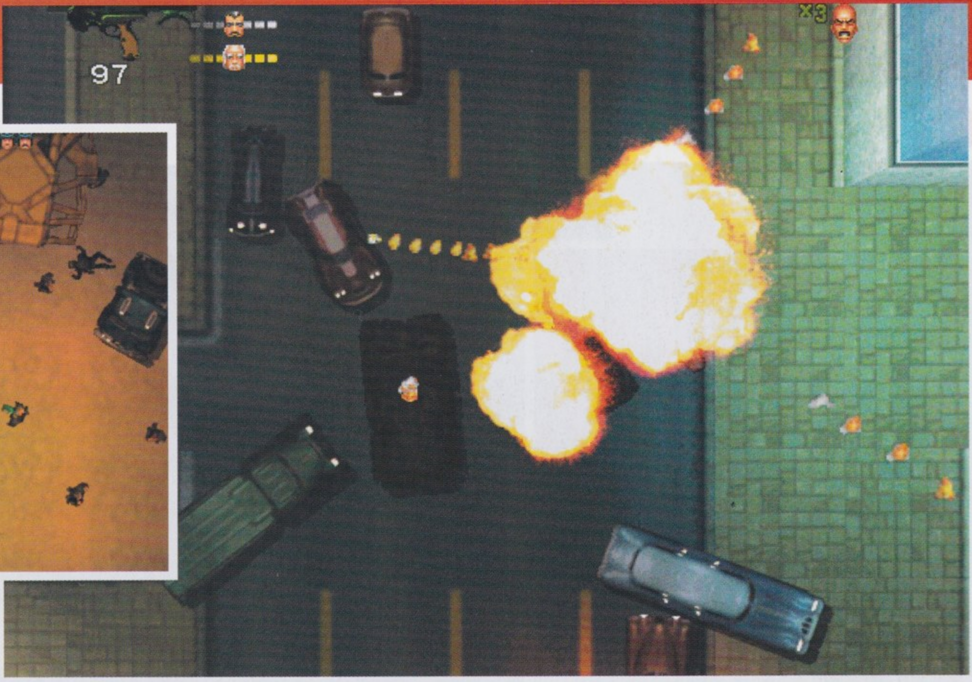
△ **Think you're tough? Just try getting on the wrong side of this dodgy character.**



△ **Dealing death to all and sundry is a good start to your climb up the criminal ranks.**



△ **It's not all about driving – sometimes you have to get on your feet to succeed.**



△ **Open ground just begging to be filled by some messy gang warfare.**

△ **We've heard of road rage, but this is ridiculous.**

Each level starts with you being told how many points you need to move onto the next one. Running jobs for the gangs earns you points, and the game records your progress to assess your performance. As you go on, friendly gangs will offer you weapons to protect yourself against the inevitable reprisals from their rivals. The seven gangs was one of the major new game features introduced in *GTA2*, and each has been designed to offer a different slant on the game.

"The subtle interaction of gangs changes the whole gameplay dynamic," reckons Gary. "Making friends with gangs can be beneficial, but their rivals will not see it the same way, and will attack you without provocation. However, you can get friendly gang members to help you complete missions. Say you're having trouble with the police. You can lead them to your turf and let your fellow gang members deal with them!"

BANGING GANGS

So who are these gangs? Top dogs are the shadowy Zaibatsu Corporation, about whom little is known save for the fact that they're generally doing something dodgy. They operate throughout the city, struggling with different rivals in each district.

Then there's the Rednecks – right-wing nationalists straight outta the trailer park. They spend their time exploding anyone they don't like, getting drunk and (probably) listening to Garth Brooks records. The Russians, meanwhile, concentrate on stealing expensive American cars and weapons to export back home, and also carry out regular contract killings.

The Yakuza are the vainest gang, focusing on raids to acquire cutting-edge weapons, cars and clothes. Then there are the Hare Krishnas, although they don't just wander round chanting rubbish like the real thing. They hate technology, see, so they'll hire you to steal guns and cars so they can have them destroyed.

The SRS are a bunch of severely pissed-off scientists who want to fight anyone who disagrees with eugenics and genetic modification – so that's 90% of the UK population accounted for then – while the Loonies are, er, loony. They hate all forms of social control, preferring anarchy. And that's the seven. You have to juggle jobs to ensure none of them grows to hate you, although it's pretty hard work.

So, you drive around the city undertaking increasingly lucrative (and dangerous) errands for the gangs. However, there are four types of law enforcement pitted against you all the while. As you'd expect, the bog standard police units present more of an irritation than a genuine threat, but they can catch you out if you're unwary.

Evade them for long enough, and the SWAT teams will get put on your case. They're faster than the police, and more aggressive in their shooting policies – yes, even by American standards. Carry on your criminal activities, and you'll come under the watchful eyes of the special agents, who operate a strict shoot-to-kill offensive.

Finally, there's the army. When they're brought in, martial law is declared, meaning that they'll stop at nothing to fill your miserable body full of holes – no matter how many innocent civilians get caught in the crossfire. Don't say we didn't warn you…

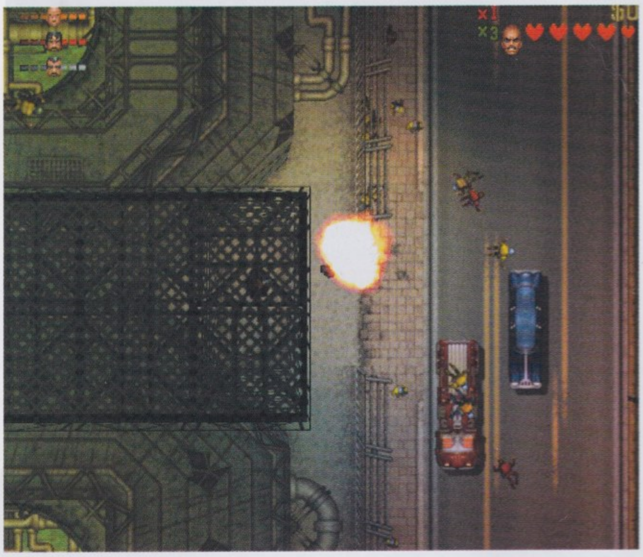
SHOOT 'EM UP

According to Gary Foreman, it's not been a difficult process converting *GTA2* to Dreamcast. "The way the console works is somewhat different to other platforms, so we've had to change certain elements of the development. Nothing too serious though."

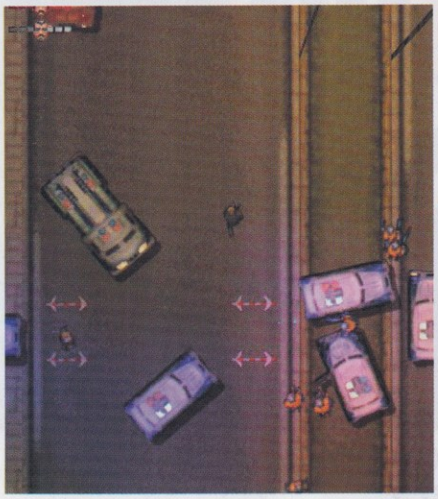
The fact that the conversion was only announced a little while ago has led

▷

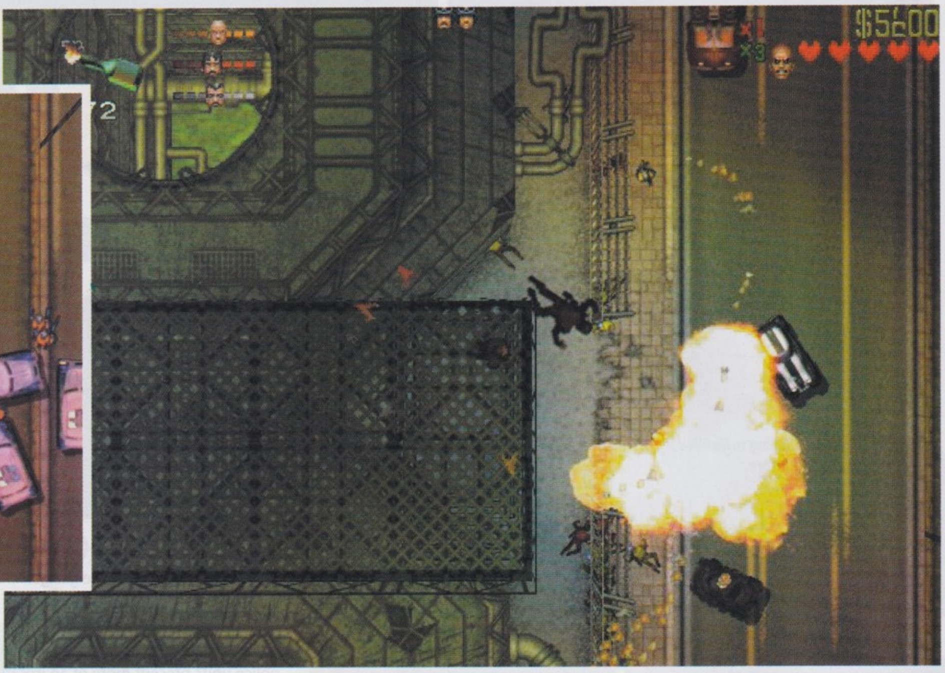
"TEAR ROUND THE STREETS RUNNING ERRANDS FOR CRIMINAL GANGS"



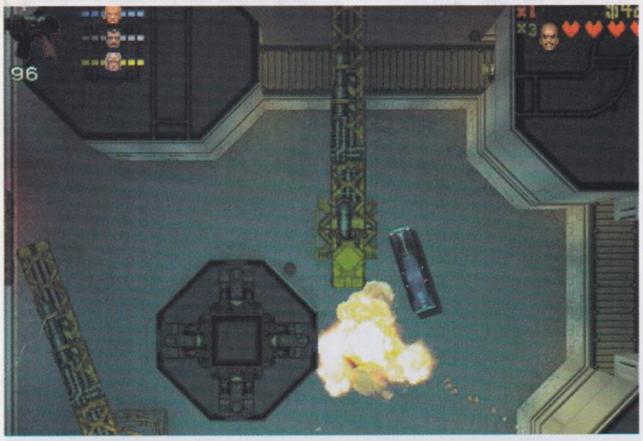
△ **You've probably noticed that exploding things is a necessary evil in *GTA2*.**



△ **Doh! Looks like somebody called the cops.**



△ **For most of us it's a game; for South Londoners it's a gritty portrayal of everyday life.**



△ ***GTA2* looks suitably brooding – these streets are no place for a coward.**

△ **If you don't watch out for your enemies, you'll be, er, all shook up.**

"IT'S BEEN ARGUED MANY TIMES THAT THE GAME SHOULD BE 3D"

▷ many people to speculate that we'll just be getting a slightly tarted up version of what's already out on other platforms. And if truth be told, even PC owners have been complaining that their version of *GTA2* has suffered from being designed for the PlayStation. The question has to be asked, are we just getting a straight port too?

"The term 'straight port' implies we're simply dumping the code onto Dreamcast with no consideration for the way in which it works, and that's simply not true," responds Gary. "We are making the Dreamcast version as close to the original as possible, but some obvious changes are required in terms of control mechanism. It's our intention to capture the same look and feel as the other versions though."

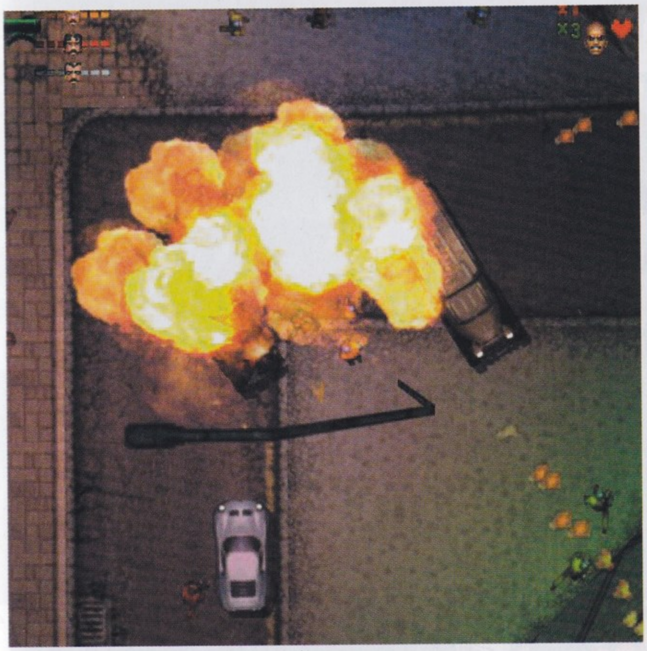
Effectively then, the game won't be all that different, but at least it's a quality game in the first place. Enigmatically, Gary claims that "we have a list of additional features that never made it into the design, but we're saving them for other projects."

So how have the team been impressed by Dreamcast so far? Gary is already a convert, although having worked for Sega Europe when the Megadrive was at its height, it's hardly a surprise. "I love it! Sega had a tough time with 32X, and everybody knows about the Saturn, but their arcade heritage is so strong, and Dreamcast is a very capable machine." He cites *Soul Calibur* and *Re-volt* as his favourite DC titles so far, and is looking forward to *Crazy Taxi* – a game not a million miles away from *GTA2*'s ramraid action.

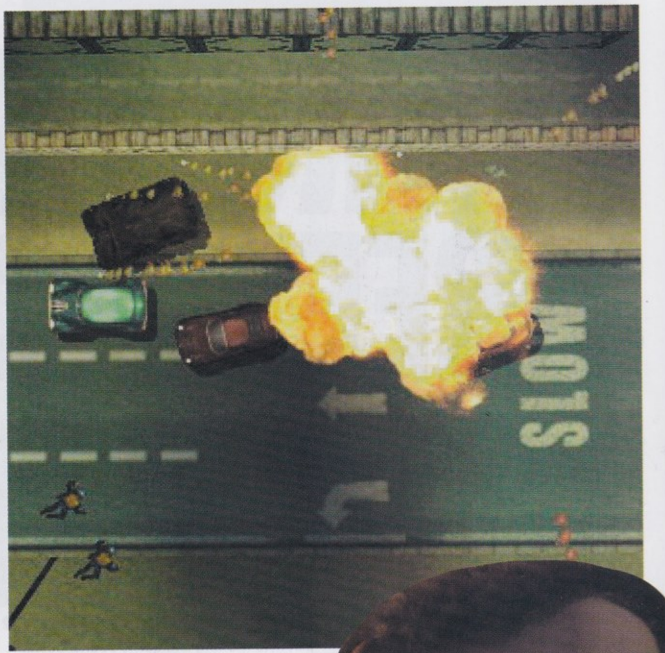
SHOCK WAVES

The one thing that's noticeable about *GTA2* since its launch on the other formats is how little public controversy it's generated compared to its predecessor. When *GTA* came out, tabloid editors, MPs and pressure groups were queuing up to condemn it, but the sequel has had a relatively smooth ride. Is it tamed down, or have people just got used to the game concept?

"It doesn't have the same shock value,



△ **"Oh dear. I guess we'd better exchange insurance details…"**



△ **Those signs are painted for a reason, y'know.**

but then we didn't intend to shock with the original," says Gary. "It's simply a game where the player must complete specific tasks and certain things are implied. It's always difficult to push the boundaries with certain types of content and still stay within the limits of what is 'acceptable'. Many people thought with the original that we'd gone too far, but then most of them hadn't even seen the game or knew anything about games."

GTA2 is certainly no different in tone to its predecessor: after all, you're still zooming round a city committing criminal acts. Maybe it's just been overtaken by other games – *Kingpin* for example – that are more explicitly violent. Or maybe people are just getting used to the idea that games can feature crime without having to get all moralistic about it. Whatever: *GTA2* is unlikely to create waves of popular protest when it gets its Dreamcast release, and for that we can all be thankful.

FLAT BEATS?

Right, here's something that may be contentious. Certainly here in the office, when we heard *GTA2* was coming to Dreamcast, we started dreaming about a souped-up 3D version a la *Crazy Taxi* – after all, it's not as if the console couldn't handle it. However, as you've already realised from the screenshots, the Dreamcast version is still faithfully 2D – hardly a surprise really bearing in mind the speed with which the conversion has been handled. It's a damn shame though, or is it?

"It doesn't necessarily benefit from being 2D, but nor does it suffer," says Gary. "The idea that a game has to be 2D or 3D to work is a myth. It's been argued many times, even with the original *Grand Theft Auto*, that the game should be 3D. We felt at the time, and still do, that the game works well using the top-down view – it's designed to work that way."

According to Gary, a 3D version of the game could have been made, but it would have meant altering a vital part of the game – the way it plays. "We wanted to create a game which focused 100% on gameplay. The problems relating to 3D meant that the design would need to be altered, and we weren't confident that we could deliver the game we wanted."

So 2D it is, and if that automatically puts you off the game, you're a fool. Still, the thought of a 3D *Grand Theft Auto* game is an appetising prospect – maybe for *GTA3*? Gary refuses to be drawn, saying only that "we're working on some cool developments that should prove to the hardcore fans that *GTA* is going to be here for some time." Who knows what the future holds: in the meantime, *GTA2* looks like plenty to be getting on with.

Here in the *ODM* office, we're actually looking forward to seeing *GTA2*, even if it does turn out to be just like the PC version. Its mixture of guns, high-speed chases, explosions and cop-dodging should make for a good game, and further proof that the big-name game franchises are heading to Dreamcast. Stand by for a full review next issue.

OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **ROCKSTAR/TAKE 2**
DEVELOPER: **LIQUID GAMES**

UPDATE

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

Best scoop out your eyes and cut off your ears right now. You're not going to believe either of them when you play this game. **ED LOMAS** is our blank Mr Potato Head lookalike

AS YOU SHOULD KNOW BY NOW, *Metropolis Street Racer* isn't going to be just another driving game. Developed over the last two years by Bizarre Creations – one of the UK's top teams – it combines previously unheard of levels of detail with some truly brilliant gameplay innovations. And, being the *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, we get to show you just how well things are coming along in the final stages of development. Lucky us. Lucky you.

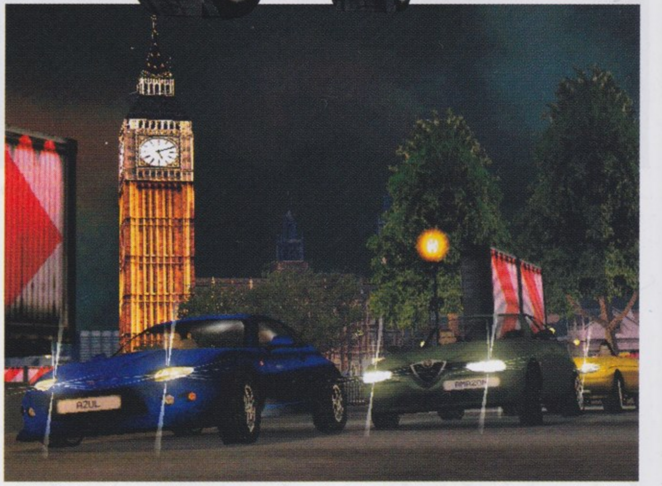
We don't really need to spend time telling you how cool the graphics are. You can see for yourself from the screenshots here that *Metropolis* is going to be the most spectacular-looking racing game ever outside of the arcades. And if you read our exclusive feature on the game's development in issue 3 you'll understand why: the detail put into the look of every car, every city, and each window of every building is almost stupidly accurate.

But the graphics aren't the only part of *Metropolis Street Racerr* to get special treatment, just as much effort has been put into making the game sound better than anything that has gone before. The man in charge of getting everything sounding just right is Sega's resident sound expert Richard Jacques, so we had a quick chat with him to find out what our ears can expect from the finished game.

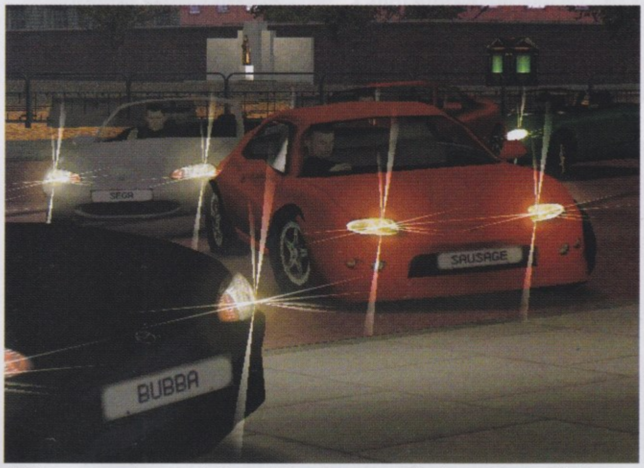
YEAH, SOUND MATE. SOUND

Richard started planning his massive project way back in April '98, long before Dreamcast was even released in Japan, and when *Metropolis Street Racer* was still in its infancy at Bizarre Creations.

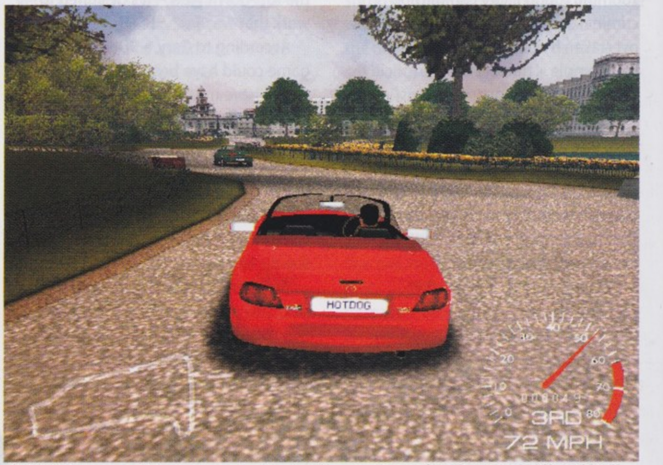
"I knew they were trying to get the flavours of the three cities with the



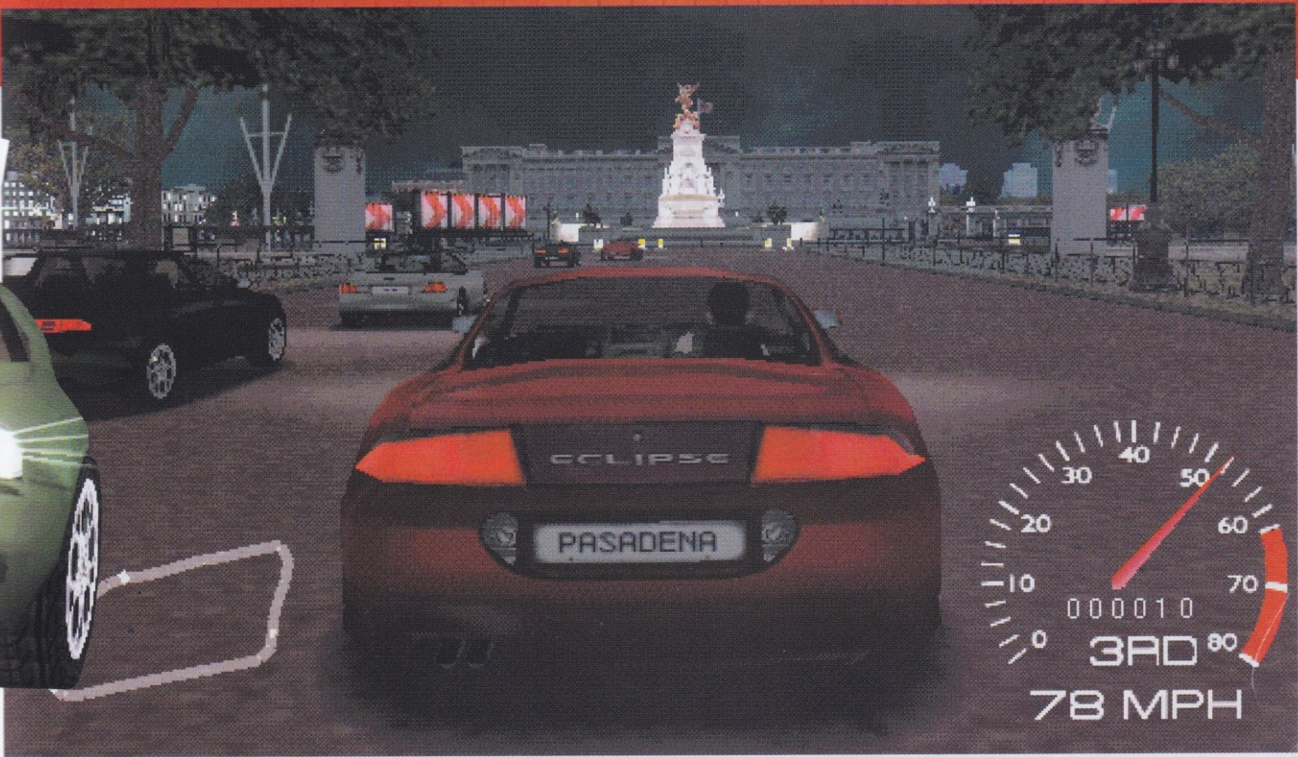
△ **Yes, Big Ben shows the right time as you play, as do all the clocks in the game. But even cooler still is that it chimes at quarter past, half past, quarter to and on every hour, just like in real life!**



△ **When you customise your car in *Metropolis Street Racer*, you can give it your own personalised number plate. And you won't have to worry about making words out of numbers like flash gits do.**



△ **While the name of the game may be street racing, you do occasionally get to go off-road. Well, kind of – you can race along the pathways through St James's Park. Don't run over any squirrels.**



△ **Speeding down The Mall towards Buckingham Palace, and it looks like there could be a bit of a bundle going into the roundabout. While you can't damage your car, crashing still loses you speed.**

realistic graphics," Richard explained, "so I decided we'd do a car radio system to make it sound like you're in the city as well as look like you're in it."

To add more choice, each city has three different radio stations to choose from, each playing varying styles of music which originated in, or are particularly popular in, the real-life city. For example, London has a dance music station, a generic pop station and a jazz/funk station (nice!); while listening to San Franciscan radio, expect lots of R 'n' B, rock and country music; and Tokyo's channels provides you with some disturbingly catchy pop hits.

Richard has written a total of 27 pieces of in-game music for *Metropolis*, covering wildly different styles. From rock and pop singalongs to trance anthems, they're all somewhere on the virtual airwaves.

"I spent about six or seven months actually writing the music, then another three or four recording everything," he told us. "It took so long to do because we had a guitarist, a bass player, four or five singers, a three-piece brass section, a rapper… It was a lot to record."

But how does the radio system hold all this music together? Again, Richard explains: "To make the radio stations sound realistic we've recorded 18 different voice-over actors – English, American and Japanese. We've made up traffic reports, weather reports, everything you'd expect to find on a real radio station." And just to make even more work for himself, every show on each of the radio stations in the game has its own specially written jingle.

Rather than simply editing DJs, reports, adverts and tunes together so that they sound like a radio station, the game actually generates its own programming as you play it. It chooses when each show begins, which tunes are going to be played, how they're going to be introduced, when the traffic reports cut in, and so on.

"Sometimes the DJ will introduce a tune before it begins, and sometimes he might do it on the fade-out – you know: 'And that last track was…' whatever – so hopefully people won't get bored," said Richard, explaining the benefits of using ADX, a streaming library which enables Dreamcast to overlay two tracks at a time.

The radio DJs sound remarkably realistic as well. The traffic report given by an excitable guy in a helicopter above the London streets is particularly good, as is the host of Tokyo's *Western Pop Show*. Also, listen out for the guy who does the famous introduction to ITN's *Nightly News* as one of London's *Capital Jazz* DJs.

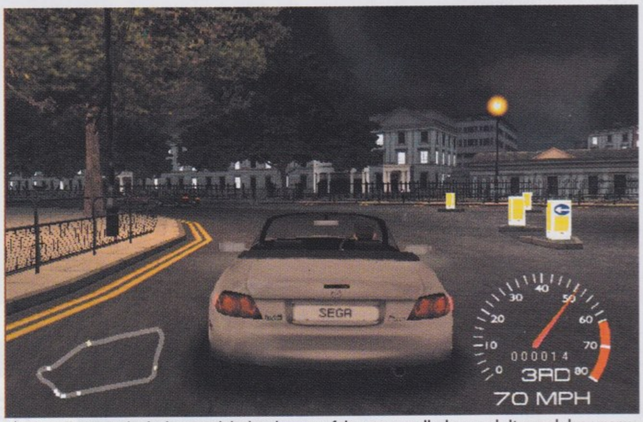
THE BEST DRIVING MUSIC… EVER!

If while listening to the radio in *Metropolis* you find that there are particular tunes you like, you'll always be able to create your own virtual CD compilation. Just choose your favourite tracks in the order you want to hear them, save the tracklisting to your VM, then put your newly created home-made album on while racing around. These are the kinds of cool touches that are going to make *Metropolis Street Racer* so special.

"WILL SET NEW STANDARDS FOR FUTURE DC TITLES"

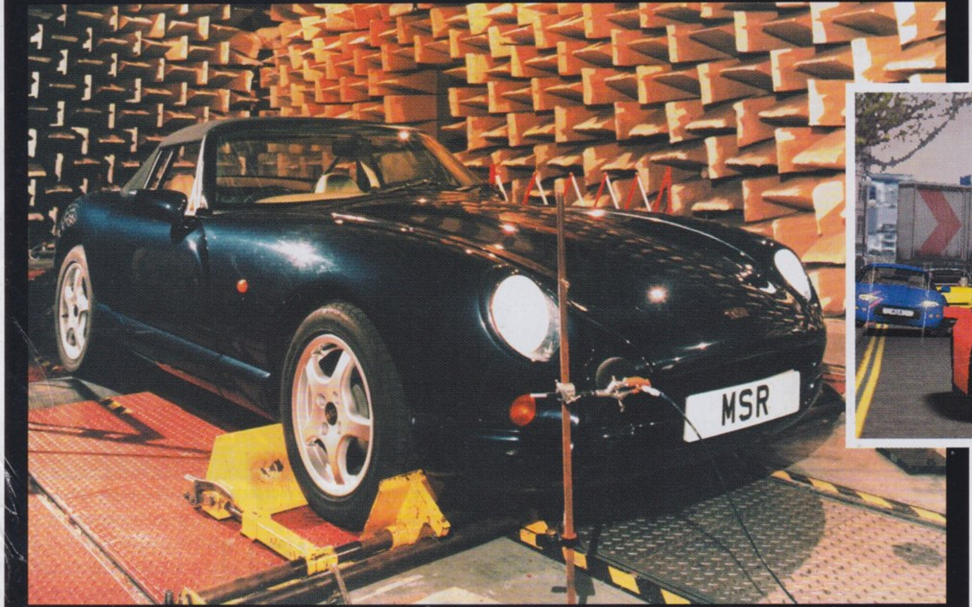
But the sonic cleverness doesn't stop there. You know that if you go through a tunnel in a driving game, your engine sound normally changes to sound like you're in a tunnel? Well…

"We've actually done depth-cueing on the buildings, so depending on how tall or wide a building is it'll give you more or less reflection on the engine sound," Richard casually told us. "If you drive down a narrow street with tall buildings, you'll hear echoes of the ▷

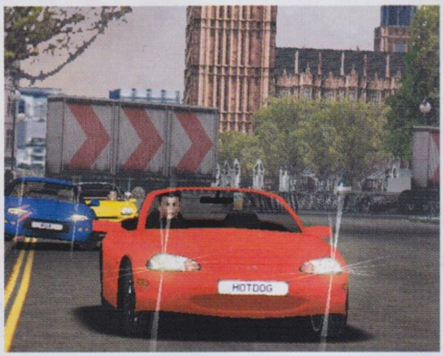


△ **The mileometer in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen really does work. It records how many miles you've travelled in each car, and saves their individual details to your VM unit.**

PURRING LIKE A LION



△ The TVR Chimaera having its most intimate engine noises recorded for *Metropolis Street Racer*. The spiky walls produce no echoes whatsoever.



△ *Metropolis Street Racer's* replay sequences look fantastic. The brake lights leave little light trails behind them at night.

SEGA AND BIZARRE CREATIONS have gone to extreme lengths to make sure that everything in *MSR* is just right, even to the point of hiring an anechoic chamber – a completely echo-free room where noise emissions are measured for all the major car manufacturers – to record the engine noise of the cars as cleanly as possible

"There were some we couldn't get because they weren't actually finished at the time," laughed Richard, "and some of the new Japanese ones because there weren't any in the country, but we got the majority of them".

Two microphones were put at the front of each car to capture the full roar of the engine, while another two were placed at the back to get a more exhaust-based sound, and a series of samples were taken at different points in the car's rev range. Jonathan Amor, *Metropolis Street Racer's* sound programmer at Bizarre, could then mix the samples to produce a perfect version of each vehicle's sound.

"In most driving games, when you change camera view from inside the car to just behind it, they use the same engine sound and just make it sound slightly different," said Richard, explaining the benefits of Sega's extra effort. "We're using a completely different sample, so that when you're in the car you get a lot of the engine, real raw stuff, and when you're in the third-person view it's a much smoother sound, which has a lot more bass on the exhaust".

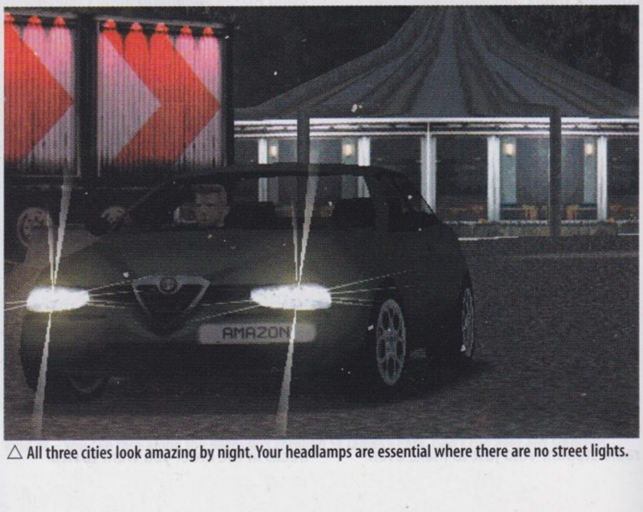
▷ car sounds coming back at you in the driving seat."

Everything in the city reflects sound its own way and, though subtle, the effect will add plenty of important atmosphere to the game. One of the coolest bits we noticed involved driving quickly down The Mall: the line of trees by the side of the road can be heard whizzing past your car with a soft "whoosh-whoosh-whoosh…" as each one individually bounces parts of your engine noise back at you.

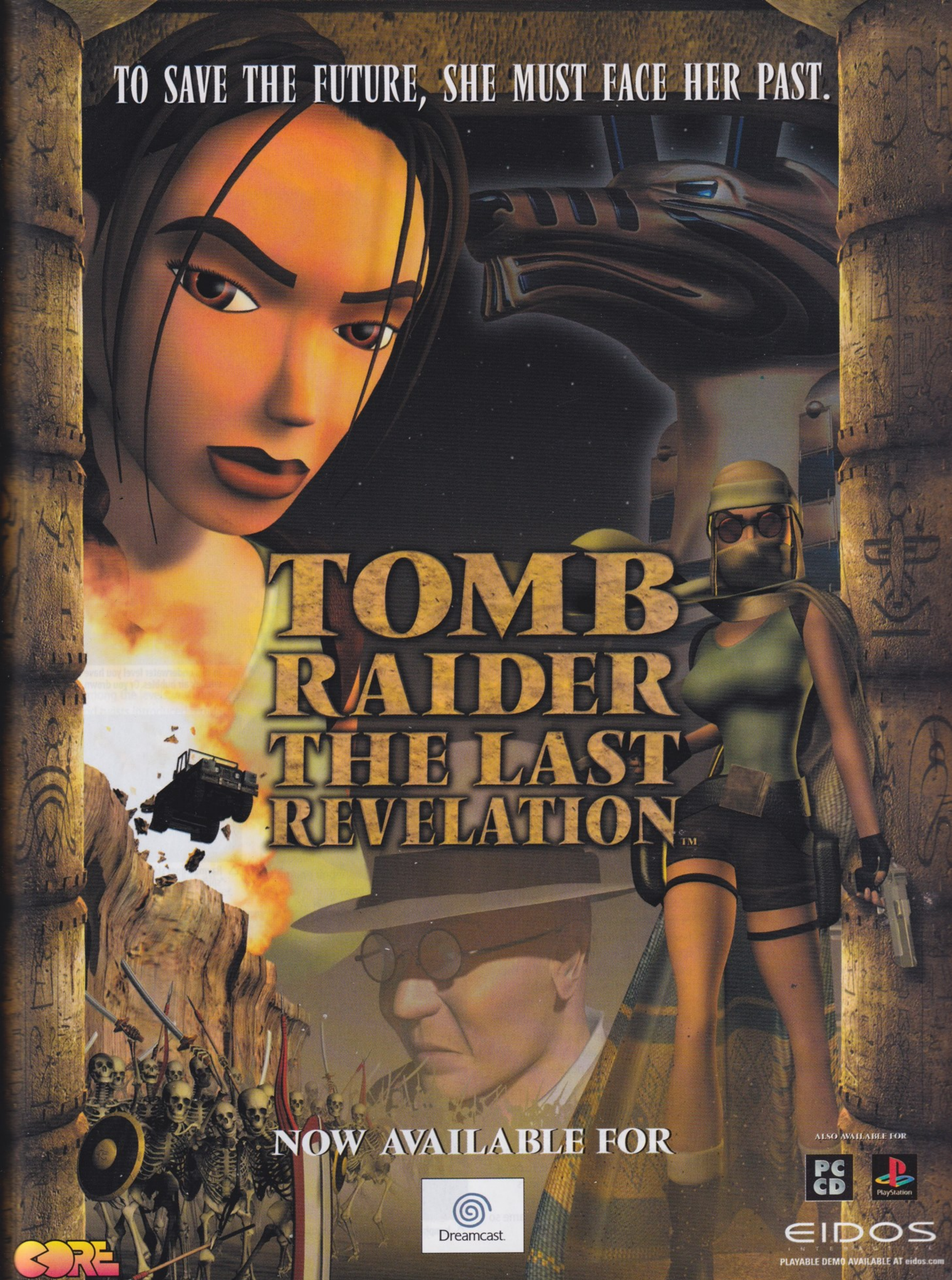
You may think we're mad getting all excited about the sound in a videogame that's not even finished yet, but it really seems as though it will set new standards for future DC titles, and that can only be a good thing.

Metropolis Street Racer is still on its way. An April release is currently planned but, frustrating though delays are for all of us, we'd rather Bizarre Creations got everything absolutely perfect before putting the game on sale than rushing it out. For now, check out our exclusive new screenshots showing various times of day, and look forward to our next issue (on sale Thursday 9 March) which will have a specially created real-time demo of the game in action on the cover disc. We guarantee you'll appreciate our enthusiasm.

OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS**



△ All three cities look amazing by night. Your headlamps are essential where there are no street lights.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RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE

The popular little French platform hero is back – and in 3D! **WARREN CHRISMAS** takes his brain into another dimension

AS WE'VE EXAMINED in our feature on page 52, some game genres have benefited from the switch from 2D to 3D over the last few years, some haven't. The platform game is one of those that has. In truth, the genre as we knew it – with 'challenging' gameplay which usually meant you died if you stepped one pixel out of place – faded out a long, long time ago (well, except on the Game Boy). In its place came the brave new polygon world of the "action adventure" led by Ms Lara Croft and Mario.

Few will have been shedding any tears at the loss of the side-scroller. With *Super Mario World* and *Sonic the Hedgehog* respectively, Nintendo and Sega produced true, timeless classics – the former notable for its sheer size and depth, the latter for all-out speed and thrills. And, yes, there were a handful of other distinguished titles (*Prince of Persia, Flashback* and *Super Metroid* spring to mind).

But for every good platform game there were a million and one sub-standard wannabes (most with ill-conceived characters), which brought nothing to the party. Remember Zool, Mr Nutz, Bubsy and Bug? If you do, it probably won't be for the right reasons.

It would be wrong to pretend that the original, side-scrolling *Rayman* (released on the Atari Jaguar, Sega Saturn, PlayStation and PC), with its bizarre limbless lead character, offered a giant leap in terms of gameplay, but it was a fun, solid game and its lush, cartoon graphics were undeniably gorgeous. More to the point, it sold by the truckload.

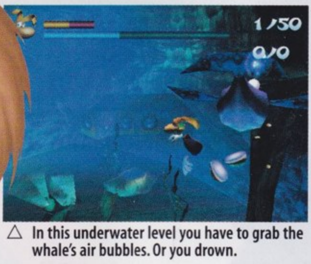
Whatever, after several years of development, the boy Rayman has finally jumped, flown, climbed, swung (you get the idea) into the third dimension. And, just as Sonic made the transition keeping the trademark speed intact, so *Rayman 2: The Great Escape* retains the original's visual loveliness.

Released on PC and Nintendo 64 before Christmas, it's received some excellent reviews, particularly on the latter machine. Indeed some publications have described it as "better than *Super Mario 64*" - no small accolade given the fact that many still consider Mario to be *the* 3D platformer.

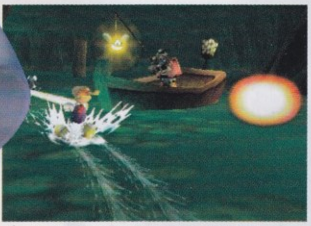
According to the storyline, a group of Robo-Pirates have attacked Rayman's home world and enslaved its occupants. It's your job to escape from imprisonment (hence the suffix of the title) and stop them. How? Well, gameplay looks fundamentally similar to Nintendo's landmark title, combining traditional platform-style leaping and jumping, a bit of baddie blasting, some exploration and mild puzzle-solving elements.

After the first level you'll be pretty much free to explore stages at will although you'll need to find certain characters and – in true platform game stylee – collect various objects to open up new levels and gain the powers needed to get through them.

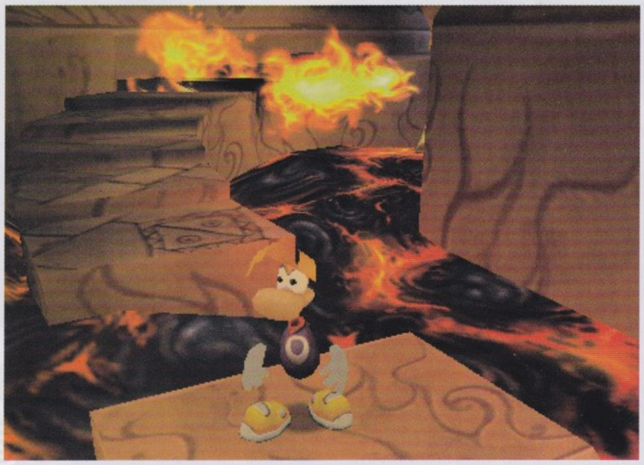
From what we've seen of the game so far there appears to be plenty of



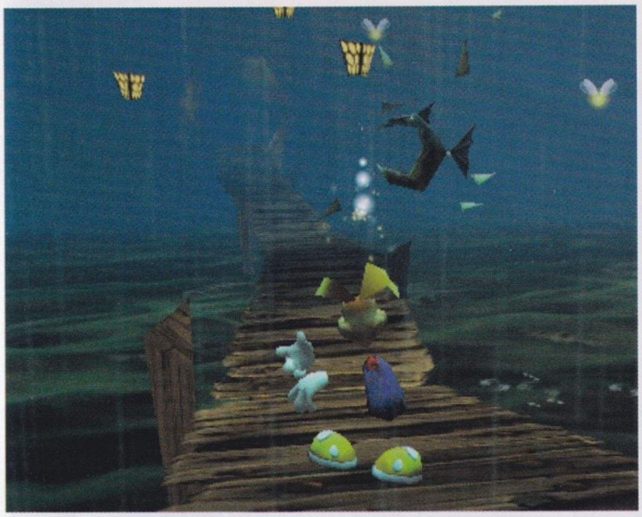
△ **In this underwater level you have to grab the whale's air bubbles. Or you drown.**



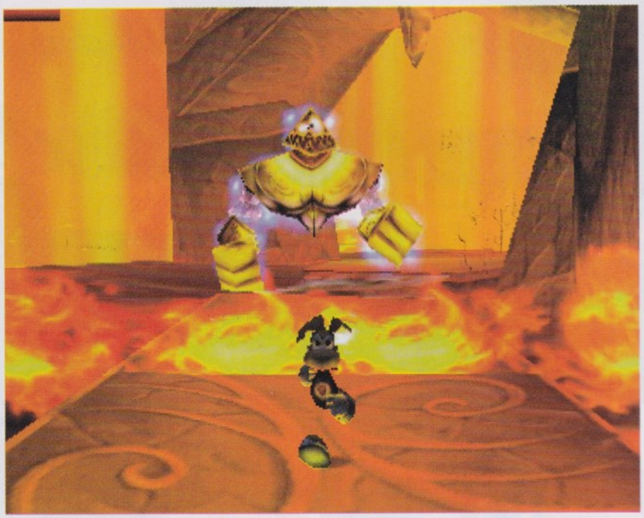
△ **Rayman goes skiing, towed by, erm, a "spirited serpent" called Sssssam.**



△ **Jumping on blocks avoiding fire. Okay, this level *could* have been done in 2D.**



△ Dunno if you can see it but there's a feint rain effect here and it looks lovely.



△ Some levels, like this, demand that you shift yer arse. Quickly.

> "THE DC VERSION IS FILLED WITH NEW STUFF"

variation among the levels, with new features and twists introduced regularly. One minute you might be skipping between rocks avoiding lethal acid or jumping across giant lily pads floating down the river, the next you could be sliding around a pirate ship, water-skiing through a swamp or diving underwater with a whale.

It's easy to see why gamers have lapped up *Rayman 2* on the Nintendo 64. The great news is, the Dreamcast version is shaping up to be even better. One thing's for sure, this is no quick, take-the-money-and-run conversion job from Ubi Soft.

"The specific work for Dreamcast started in June 1999," explains Arnaud Carrette, Project Manager for the DC edition. "In total, the Dreamcast version's development time is a little over six months with around 20 people working on it. It's not just a matter of porting the game to a new platform – the Dreamcast version is filled with improvements and all sorts of new stuff."

By 'improvements' Arnaud is referring to Dolby Surround-encoded sound, re-worked menus and cinematic sequences and, thanks to the Dreamcast's processing might, a constant frame rate of 50/60 frames per second, enhanced animation, additional creatures and far greater visual detail. Phew!

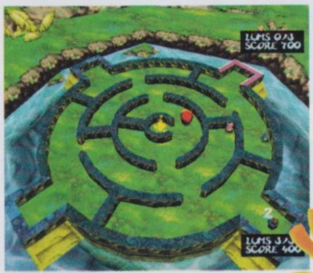
"The power of the console has allowed the [development] team to have lots of freedom and fun while making the game," adds Arnauld. "We were able to concentrate on the game's features because we didn't have to worry much about optimisation and programming adjustments".

"We further developed special effects and created many others from scratch," he explains. "Imagine that you're swimming underwater and your vision distorts, or that dead leaves fall out of the sky, or that footsteps appear when Rayman gets out of the water, or that backgrounds darken when his fist gains power… It's really all these little details that have taken *Rayman 2* to a higher plane [on Dreamcast]." The screenshots will give you an idea what's he's talking about but, really, you have to see it in action to appreciate it. Good job we've got a splendid demo on this month's coverdisc, eh? Check it out.

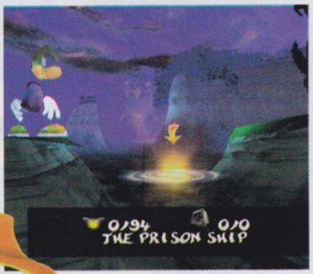
As for 'new stuff', well there's an entirely new stage called Globox Village for starters, plus at least three additional bonus levels. One of these, Globox Disc, is causing a real stir among those who have played it and not without reason. It's a multi-player sub-game in which up to four players race to collect objects from the middle of a rotating, circular maze littered with power-ups. The intricacies are too complex to explain here but, take it from us, it's brilliant fun.

And you *still* want more? Well apparently there's going to be another level in *Rayman 2: The Great Escape* – again unique to the Dreamcast edition. This extra special level can be 'downloaded' (read: unlocked) via the Internet. How many does that make in total? Around 50, we think, although to be honest we've completely lost track. We'll make sure we count when we review it in full next issue (on sale Thursday 9 March), okay?

OUT: **MARCH**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **UBI SOFT**



△ The infamous Globox Disc bonus level. Take it from us, it's great.



△ It's never too hard working out where you have to go (hint: follow the arrow).

3D OR NOT 3D?

IMAGE: ADAM HAYES

3D OR NOT 3D?

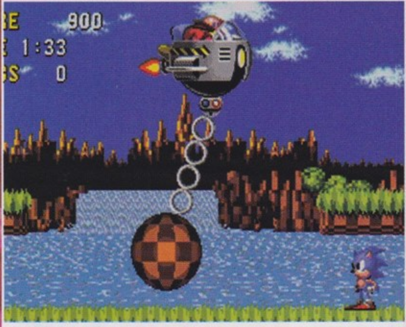
WE'VE FINALLY ENTERED THE TRUE ERA OF 3D GAMING. BUT IS IT AT THE COST OF GREAT 2D GAMES? **TOM GUISE** GOES 'INTO-THE-SCREEN'…

HEY, HAVE YOU HEARD? They're bringing back that classic game you love. Yeah, and what's more they're turning it 3D. Which game? Doesn't matter. Pick one, any one, and that's probably it. This month it's *Ecco The Dolphin*, last month it was *Sonic The Hedgehog*, before that it was *Zelda* and *Mario*. Everyone's having an extra dimension fitted nowadays. The times when up and down on your joypad really *were* for up and down are gone. It's into-the-screen now, baby. But why?

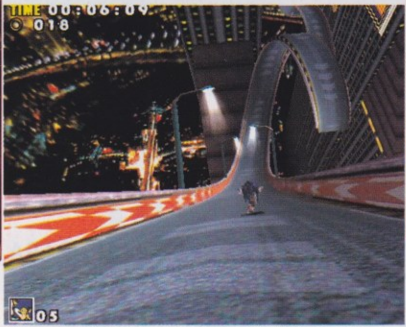
"It's consumer desire coupled with the power of new machines," says Martyn Chudley, MD of Bizarre Creations, makers of *Metropolis Street Racer* for Dreamcast. "Things have moved on. In the real world of commercial and technical accolade, 2D doesn't pay the bills anymore."

So 3D is the new symbol for money. But before we all exchange our coins for bronze and silver spheres, what about the plain fact that some games might actually be better in 2D? "Any 2D game can be done in 3D and look better," says Mike Diskett, director of Mucky Foot, who've just made PC action blockbuster *Urban Chaos*. "Even a game that plays in 2D benefits from a 3D polygon engine because you can have perfect perspective."

Of course, that sounds fine to us at *Official Dreamcast Magazine* – we're playing the most sophisticated 3D gaming machine in the world. But we're still not convinced. So we've taken nine classic 2D games and decided to look at them from a fresh perspective – literally. Have they survived the 3D revolution? And what new form have they taken? Worse, if they proved to be too flat, what has become of them? Whatever the case, we care about just one thing – are they better in 3D than in 2D? Join us now, as we take the videogame into another dimension. ▶



△ **The original *Sonic The Hedgehog*: the 2D levels were perfect for super-fast platform fun.**



△ ***Sonic Adventure*: takes the rollercoaster Sonic experience into 3D. And then some.**

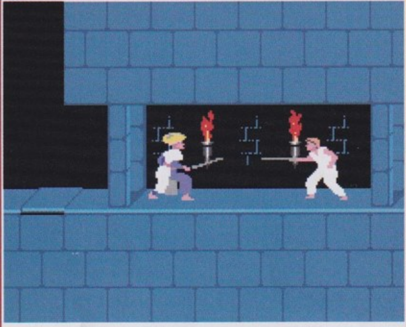
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

THE BASIC BUT brilliant platform game that made the MegaDrive console a multi-million-selling hit. You steered Sonic across a horizontally scrolling landscape, collecting rings and bashing badniks. The real hook was how gravity affected Sonic, so he'd accelerate down slopes and need momentum going up ramps. The skill was in trying not to lose all of your rings while still flying along at top speed for a record-breaking time.

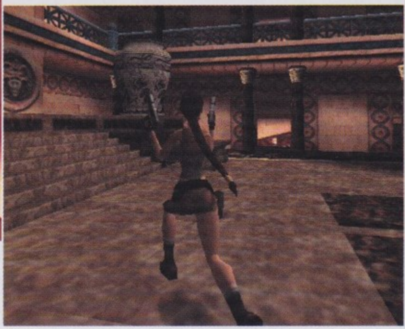
So, how has Sonic fared in the third dimension? Well, as the name suggests, *Sonic Adventure* is more than just a simple platformer, but those trademark elements are still there. In the speedy action levels, collecting rings and smashing badniks is still the key, the only difference being that you're pushing forward instead of to the right. The 3D graphics are used more to dazzle than to add depth.

However, there are loads of other areas that do use 3D in a big way. The hubs are areas where Sonic can wander freely, chatting to people to open new areas. And characters like Knuckles have strong exploration levels. Helpful elements have also been added, like a homing jump which guides your attack to the nearest baddie. The result is a different game from the previous ones. Maybe not better, but certainly more visually fantastic.

BETTER IN 3D? **POSSIBLY**



△ ***Prince Of Persia*: looks simple now, but this was once the ultimate platform puzzle adventure.**



△ **Where *Prince Of Persia 3D* should have been the next big thing, *Tomb Raider* hit the spot years ago.**

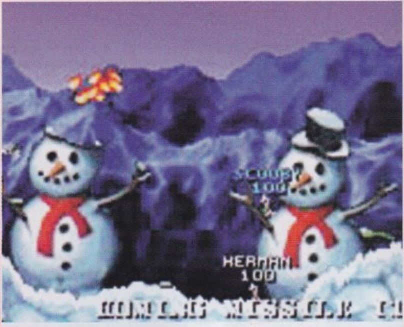
PRINCE OF PERSIA

THE GAME THAT really kickstarted the platform adventure genre, with you playing an Aladdin-style hero battling his way through a trap-filled castle. Unlike the cutesy, jump around-style platformers, *Prince Of Persia* was very precise. Jumps had to be performed from an exact distance, running leaps needed measured steps, and negotiating hazards had to be done in slow shuffles. It was frustrating, but the epic scale of the mission made it exciting.

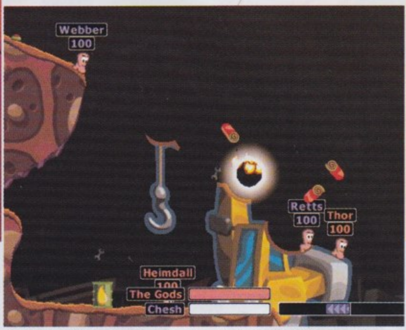
Prince Of Persia 3D was released only recently (on PC). While it does effectively take the old gameplay and put it in a 3D environment, it's a bit late, because someone else already did it and added an extra ingredient to the mix – Lara Croft.

The *Tomb Raider* series is very much the 3D successor to *Prince Of Persia*, from the mix of puzzles, platforms and action, right down to the fiddly, almost frustratingly precise controls. The fact is, though, *Tomb Raider*'s fantastic 3D levels have a lot to do with the appeal of the games, regardless of what the media would like to think. And since the first *TR* release we've seen all manner of copycat clones appear on the market. Definitely a game style that's effectively moved into the 3D era and not looked back.

BETTER IN 3D? **YES**



△ ***Worms*: the original took gaming by storm. The simple graphics helped you enjoy a brilliant game even better.**



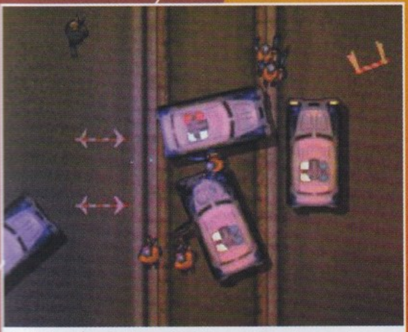
△ ***Worms Armageddon*: more fun features, but the latest *Worms* instalment is still very much a 2D game.**

WORMS

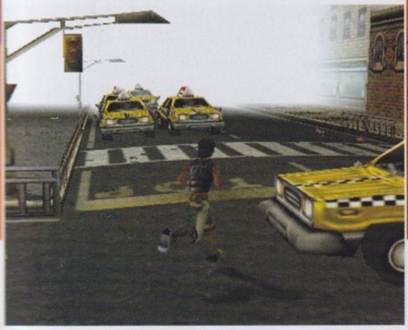
ONE OF THE LAST original 2D games invented, and perhaps the only true 2D game still fighting the cause. Each player has a team of four worms, and the idea is to destroy everyone else's worms by any means you can. That includes kung fu punches, shooting them, blowing them up (with explosives ranging from grenades to old women), or just ordering an all-out air strike. Hugely addictive and still massively popular, the latest instalment, *Worms Armageddon,* has just been released on Dreamcast. But, while an excellent game, it's still 100 per cent two-dimensional. How come? "*Worms* is a game which by design works better in 2D," says Martyn Brown of *Worms* developers Team 17. "I'd like to think that people don't consider the dimension aspect when they consider *Worms* – it's about gameplay. Polygons themselves don't guarantee fun. *Worms* delivers its own brand of stimulation, mostly from the player's own reading of events on screen."

So have Team 17 ever considered making a 3D *Worms*? "There are a number of gameplay aspects required," Martyn comments, "And it's not easy to achieve the same results in 3D. We will eventually release a 3D *Worms*, but it won't be until it's a format we believe will take the game forwards rather than sideways – or backwards."

BETTER IN 3D? **NO**



△ *GTA2*: this series is excellent fun, and the plan view is perhaps needed to appreciate the manic action.



△ The future of *GTA*? *Urban Chaos* offers free-roaming city action in an impressive three dimensions.

GRAND THEFT AUTO

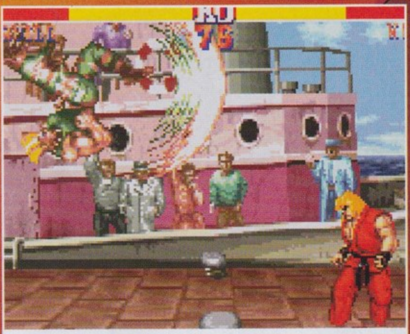
THIS GAME'S PULLED in as much controversy as it has acclaim, and it's huge on PlayStation and PC. You're a criminal working for the mob. Hijack any vehicle, shoot anybody, escape police chases… the charm is that you can do anything. The nature of the game makes it a 2D plan-view affair, where you watch everything from above.

Even the recent sequel made no attempt to go 3D. Why? "Both were considered for 3D," explains *GTA2* developer Gary J Foreman of Rockstar Games. "However, we have driving and shooting. Most first-person games on PC are best with a mouse, but driving games aren't. The change of control wouldn't be smooth, and this is vital. We considered all the 'what ifs' and decided 2D was best."

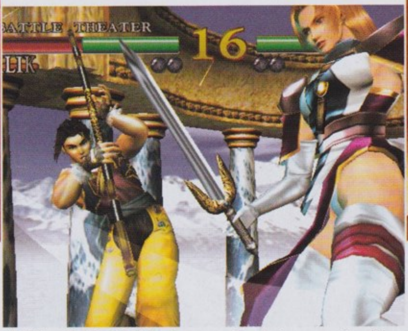
However, there has been a 3D game recently that's similar. *Urban Chaos* enables you to roam a city as a cop, commandeering vehicles and fighting hoods. "Most developers create a driving game, beat 'em up, platformer, shoot 'em up or adventure. We have them all in a fully realised urban environment," explains Mike Diskett of Mucky Foot. The result is very good, but true enough the controls do prove fiddly at times. Perhaps the sequel will truly realise the free-roaming 3D game.

• GTA 2 *is previewed on page 42*

BETTER IN 3D? NOT YET



△ There's no bigger fighting game series than *Street Fighter II*, but it hasn't made it into the 3D era.



△ Titles like *Soul Calibur* show exactly what you can do with a 3D fighter. Visual brilliance is what people want now.

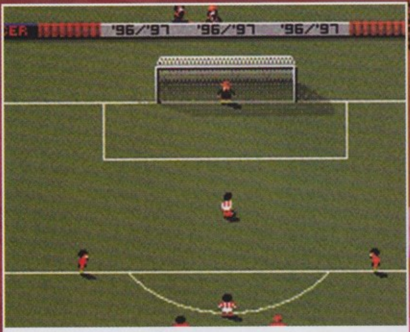
STREET FIGHTER

IT REVOLUTIONISED FIGHTING games with moves that you can link together instantly – combos! The technical precision of *Street Fighter* combat meant people spent years mastering techniques. With tons of playing guides across all versions, it's one of the most documented games ever and its worldwide playing population is still in the millions.

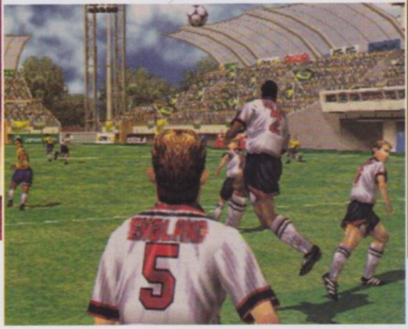
Even before the last (and still widely revered) *Street Fighter III*, 3D fighting games had long been around. The one that started it all is the excellent *Virtua Fighter*, with the third instalment on Dreamcast, but the *Tekken* series on PlayStation has proved popular. Curiously, *Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha*, the 3D version of the series, effectively featured the same 2D gameplay as its predecessors, but with polygon graphics.

The main difference between all 3D fighting games and *Street Fighter* is precision. With two dimensions you could lock exact hits into three zones – head, body, legs – but 3D lends the freedom to sidestep, spar, and even strike in ways and angles you weren't expecting. It's just more realistic. *Street Fighter* will always be a hardcore favourite, but for the mass market out there, Dreamcast titles like *Ready 2 Rumble* (*ODM* #1, 9/10) and *Soul Calibur* (*ODM* #2, 10/10) look and feel far more satisfying.

BETTER IN 3D?: YES



△ This is about as exciting as *Sensible Soccer* ever looked, but it was all in the way it played.



△ There are a lot of criticisms about the way *Virtua Striker* plays, but there's no doubting it looks incredible.

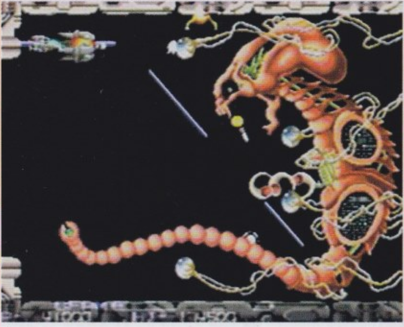
SENSIBLE SOCCER

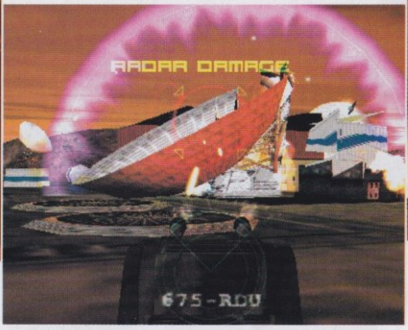
BACK IN THE EARLY '90s, this was the football game all true gamers swore by. Viewed from above, with a pitch that scrolled up and down, the gameplay was simple. Your players were little more than peg people bouncing the ball in front of them, but it was fast, and your teammates moved cleverly, so passing was always swift and effective. Some people, stubbornly, still claim it's the best footie game ever.

Football is one of the most popular videogame genres around, with new versions appearing every month. The gameplay is always going to be 2D, as it's set on a rectangular pitch; it's in the graphics and player AI that we've seen leaps and bounds.

FIFA and *International Superstar Soccer*, with their polygon characters, have brought in amazing animation, and with it thrilling tricks, plays, feints and passes. Switching camera angles, and even watching replays from any view, all adds to the enjoyment. Perhaps the greatest step in 3D looks (although not in depth of play) is *Virtua Striker 2*. Squint, and it looks like real footie on your telly. While these games would all play just as well in 2D overhead mode, the fact is everyone wants realistic 3D graphics.

BETTER IN 3D? WITHOUT A DOUBT


△ *R-Type* was one of the all-time shoot 'em up greats. Even now it's still a thrilling experience.



△ Games like *Incoming* offer shoot 'em up action, but are a long way from taking *R-Type* thrills into 3D.

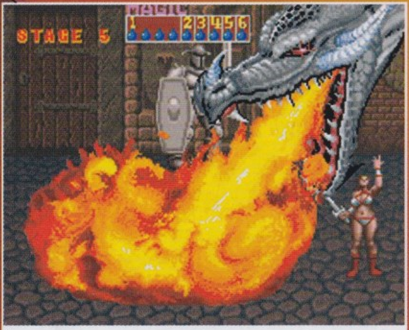
R-TYPE

ONE OF THE GREATEST game styles of the 2D heyday was the scrolling shoot 'em up. Whether up-the-screen or horizontally scrolling, they were everywhere. And the *R-Type* series, with their fantastic alien levels, thundering power-ups and powerful music, were some of the best. Plus you always knew there was a gigantic boss waiting at the end of each level.

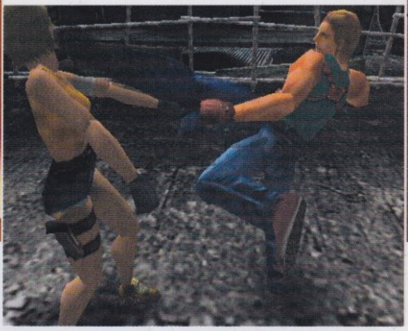
For some strange reason scrolling shoot 'em ups just about vanished with the 2D era. Some companies toyed with polygon versions of their old classics, but kept the 2D scrolling style. Others took a strong dip into the 3D waters – *Starwing* is probably the only really successful 3D shoot 'em up that has the essence of a 2D scroller – but ultimately we've seen no real results in 3D.

Incoming on Dreamcast offers 3D shooting action, but it's not one of the best games out there. An into-the-screen *R-Type*, with immersive levels packed with swarms of enemies, and a huge boss at the end, might seem an obvious and brilliant idea, but we've yet to see it truly happen.

BETTER IN 3D? **NOPE**



△ *Golden Axe* turned the scrolling beat 'em up into an excellent sword-and-sorcery adventure.


△ Fighting adventures are definitely a big 3D pull. *Zombie Revenge* looks set to be fantastic.

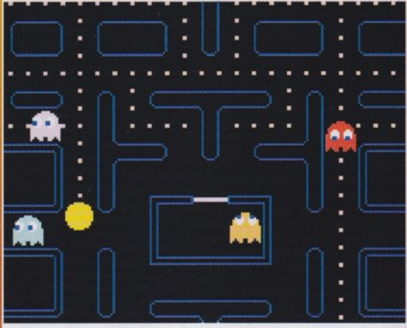
GOLDEN AXE

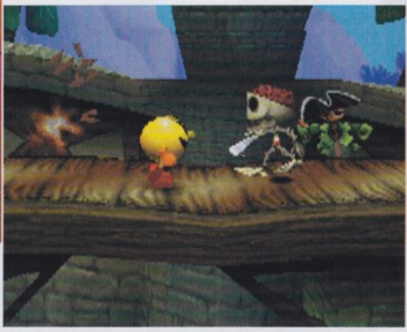
ANOTHER CLASSIC 2D game style was the scrolling beat 'em up. These were always multiplayer, and the aim was just to stagger across a moving landscape, fighting everything that came at you and eating big hunks of ham or chicken that you found in rubbish bins (to replenish health). *Golden Axe* was one of the all-time greats, mainly because it added swords and magic to the mix. Also, the chicken wasn't in bins – it just lay on the floor.

The scrolling beat 'em up is still with us in the 3D age, and is probably still best described as the scrolling beat 'em up. Recent Dreamcast title *Dynamite Cop* is one such example. Now in a polygon environment, you're still ushered along a set route, and the 3D doesn't offer any extra freedom, it just makes it all look a hell of a lot more impressive.

That said, no scrolling 3D beat 'em up has generated the same excitement as 2D classics like *Final Fight* or *Streets Of Rage*. But 3D has only just reached a level where large numbers of fighters can really be made to battle in big environments. Dreamcast owners may soon see how amazing this genre can be with the upcoming *Zombie Revenge*.

BETTER IN 3D? **GETTING CLOSE**


△ Looks simple, but it's super-cool. Few people can fail to love *Pac-Man*, even picking it up for the first time nowadays.


△ Turning *Pac-Man* into 3D may appeal to a new generation, but if it's not a good game, what's the point?

PAC MAN

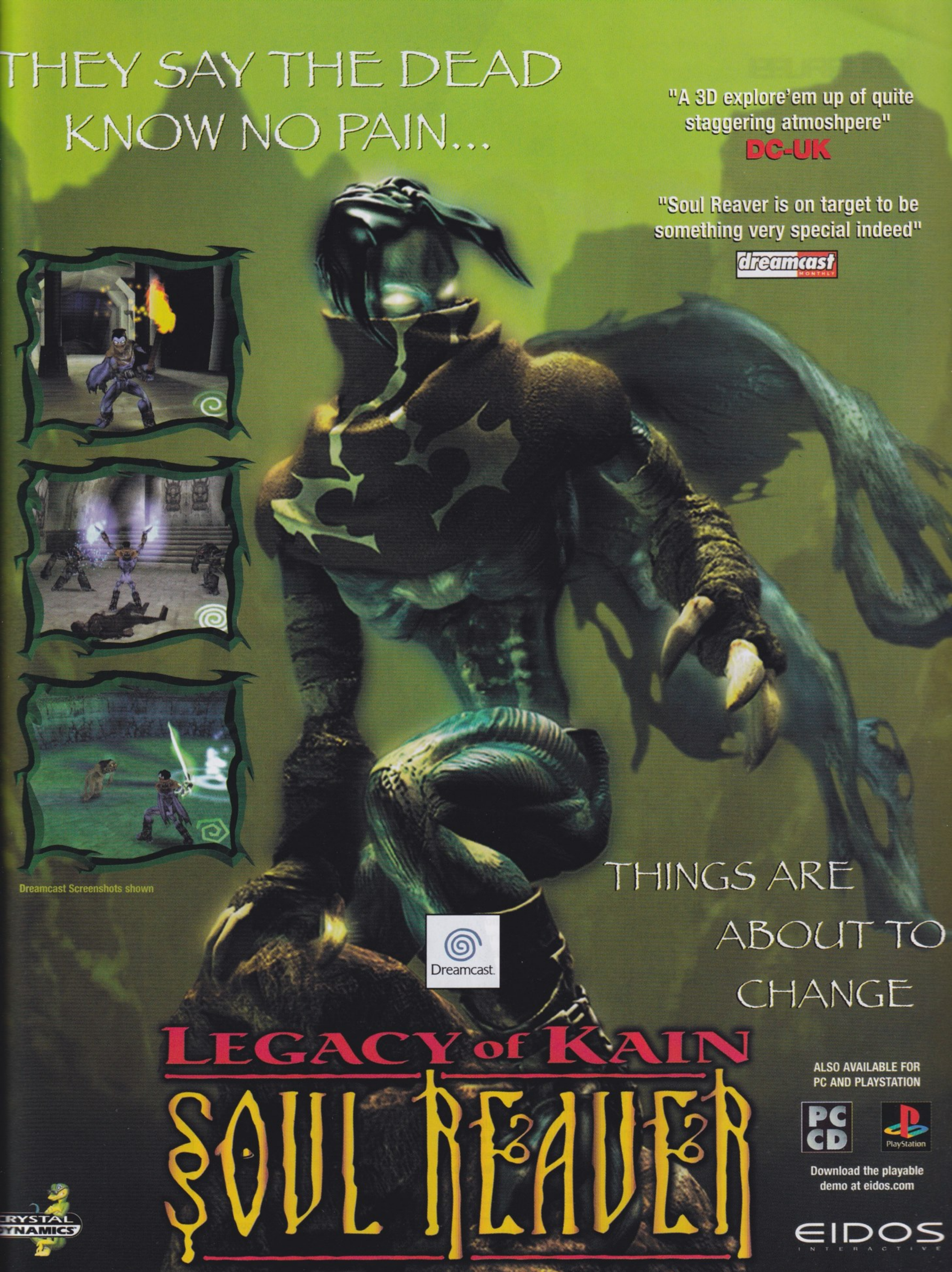
ONE OF THE FIRST and best games ever made, *Pac-Man* is also one of the strangest concepts ever. As if you didn't know, you play a pie-shaped head in a maze. The aim is to eat all the dots while avoiding four clever ghosts. There are power pills that give you the upper hand for a while, but these have to be used sparingly. The maze never changes, it just gets faster and harder.

Pac-Man recently got a full 3D renovation with his 20th Anniversary game on PlayStation. It's a terrible 3D platformer that has little to do with his roots. Reckon they should have stuck to the maze concept? Uh uh, there are 3D mazes too, with Pac gobbling around shrub mazes and beaches. The fact is that *Pac-Man*, like many 2D classics, is just better off left alone. To prove it, the original game is going down a storm on Neo Geo Pocket.

But will we ever see a 2D innovation like it again? Perhaps with Sonic Team's upcoming *Chu Chu Rocket* [see page 58]. But Mucky Foot's Mike Diskett makes a comment worth pondering: "I think every bit of gameplay has been squeezed out of the format by now. But imagine the loss if the 3D obsession had started before *Tetris* had been invented."

- *Also see 2D versus 3D being discussed in this month's Group Therapy, page 122*

BETTER IN 3D? **NO WAY**


THEY SAY THE DEAD KNOW NO PAIN...
"A 3D explore'em up of quite staggering atmoshpere"
DC-UK
"Soul Reaver is on target to be something very special indeed"
dreamcast MONTHLY
Dreamcast Screenshots shown
THINGS ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE
Dreamcast
LEGACY of KAIN
SOUL REAVER
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PC AND PLAYSTATION
PC CD
PlayStation
Download the playable demo at eidos.com
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS
EIDOS INTERACTIVE

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KRIS OVENDEN

AGE: 24
OCCUPATION: IT helpdesk
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: *Super Bomberman*, "or *Twister* with lard."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: *Chu-Chu Rocket*

DOUG JOHNSON

AGE: 24
OCCUPATION: Web designer
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: "*Pac Man*. It's never been bettered."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: *Chu-Chu Rocket*. "It's the *Pac Man* for a new millennium."

CHEWY

AGE: 24
OCCUPATION: "Computer uber guru"
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: "*Zelda*. The most immersive game of the century."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: "*Chu-Chu Rocket*. Obviously."

MATT CRITCHLOW
AGE: 26
OCCUPATION: production controller
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: *Half-Life*. "Ooh-smooth graphics."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: *Chu-Chu Rocket*. "It's bloody good fun."

OF MICE AND MEN

Chu-Chu Rocket's combination of *Tom And Jerry* and *Lemmings* has taken Japan by Storm. We sent four *ODM* readers into battle to see whether UK gamers are ready for the ultimate catfight. **POGGY** is your commentator

CAT AND MOUSE: the age-old adversaries, mimicked throughout society in school playgrounds, office politics and obscure Russian novels. Will our four players emerge from their encounter with *Chu-Chu Rocket* stronger, wiser and with the courage to face life afresh? Or will they play long into the night and descend into brawling and name-calling?

With something of the air of sumo wrestlers, albeit fuelled by late-night cheeseburgers, our travellers contemplate the forthcoming battle.

"Is that a mouse, or a rabbit?" Doug questions, taking a philosophical tangent few could have predicted so early into the game.

"Well if that's a cat, it must be a mouse," argues Chewy, showing early support for solid scientific logic.

After the respective species of the characters have been properly debated ("It's got a tail. Rabbits don't have tails." "Of course they do!" "Not all long and stretchy, they don't." "Well maybe things are different in Japan." "What?!") the players start to decipher the game. Despite dire warnings of fiendish complexity and incomprehensible Japanese from all who have come into contact with *Chu-Chu Rocket*, our wise gamers find the path to enlightenment within minutes and are soon embroiled in primeval battle.

The aim in Sega's latest puzzle game is to inflict as much devious pain as possible on your fellow players through the theft and collection of cartoon-style mice (or rabbits). Each of the four players has a base shaped like a rocket on the square playing area, the location of which changes throughout the game. Using the direction keys, each player must lead the mice into their rocket and away from the bases of their opponents. Whoever has the most mice, or chu-chus (or rabbits), at the end of the game wins. The first player to win three times is then the champion and is free to parade around the room to the jeers and jealous heckling of the losers.

Which sounds simple enough. The nightmare begins when the cats suddenly appear on screen, attempting to force their way into the rockets and make off with all the mice. The nightmare continues when the chu-chus suddenly speed up in a frenzy of rodent activity and spew all over the screen. Apocalypse is reached when the mice appear with power-ups, which is often the same time as the rest of the players work out what they're doing and become uncontrollably poisonous.

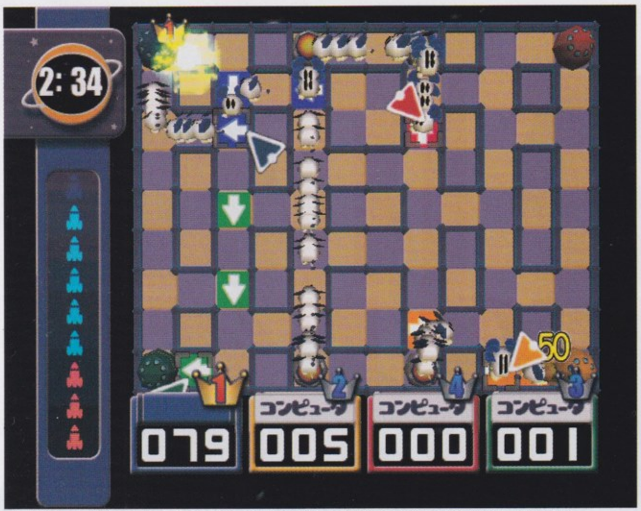
In the one-player game you can only use one arrow to guide the mouse safely into the rocket, avoiding the cat on a choice of boards. This is considerably more *Krypton Factor* that the four-player game, but once our group had worked out what to do they completed them quickly. All the better to return to revising the room's pecking order.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

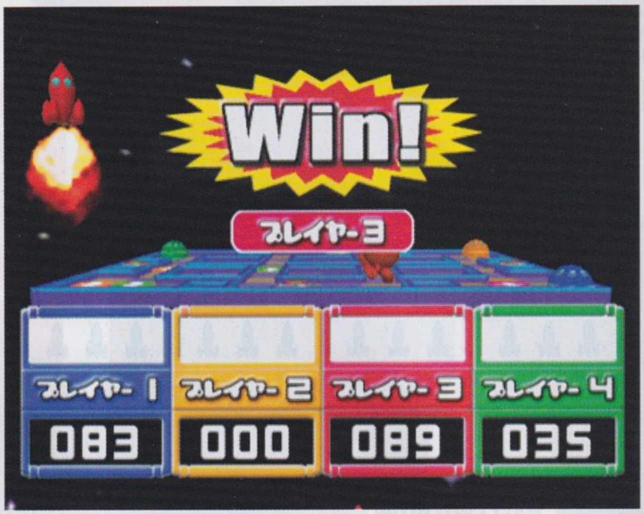
Of our players, Doug was the first to pick up the Pied Piper skills necessary to guide his mice into the rocket. Matt immediately blames the

▷

PHOTOGRAPHY: HUGH THRELFALL



△ **Whenever there are cats around, everyone starts picking on the current chu-chu king!**



△ **The rocket containing the most chu-chus at the end of a round gets blasted into space.**

▷ controllers: "They're not exactly slimline, are they? And I keep forgetting which direction I'm going in. Which colour am I again?"

Kris, having trapped only four mice, is unimpressed: "It's too fast. I can't see what I'm doing. Where are the mice coming from? It's a simple idea, easier to grasp than builder's arse cleavage, but it's just too fast"

The seemingly random way in which the position of each rocket changes on the board causes our foursome much confusion, as Doug, in full jammy-git mode, suddenly realises that he's leading a veritable plague of mice into Chewy's rocket.

"A BIT MORE DETAIL ON THE GRAPHICS MIGHT BE NICE"
– DOUG

"Ah ha ha ha, have it!" exclaims Chewy, as a chu-chu with a question mark runs into his rocket, causing the rest of the chu-chus on the board to pour into it, sending Chewy's score up over 200.

The group's happiness at Doug's misfortune is short-lived, however, as some deceptively innocent-looking cats start roaming the board.

The first casualty is Matt, who watches helplessly as his rocket is emptied by the marauding felines. Everyone frantically starts reversing the arrows around their rockets in a desperate attempt to protect their remaining chu-chus.

Such is the initial panic that most of the group find their arrows opposing each other, sending the remaining chu-chus spinning between them before vanishing, while cats sneak in unnoticed. As each player can have only three arrows on the board at one time, with the first arrow vanishing only when a fourth is laid down, perplexity reigns and the stress and swearing levels in the room rise.

As the cats disappear and normal play resumes, Doug revives his ailing fortunes, deftly directing the chu-chus into his rocket directly from their source as they suddenly speed up.

As the rocket shoots off the board, play is suspended when it is discovered that pushing the shoulder buttons triggers a series of Japanese exclamations. The room is filled with the kind of noises that, if you heard them in a dark alley, would send you looking for the nearest mutant turtle for protection.

Although no one knows what the Japanese phrases mean, or even whether they're congratulatory or insulting, like parrots the group start to mimick them. The rest of the game is then spent communicating in a weird, semi-intelligible hybrid of English and cod Japanese.

Doug, meanwhile, is unhappy. Emitting a series of screeches and whistles which may or may not garner him a free glass of sake at his local sushi restaurant, he jabs frantically at the controller as Matt neatly diverts a rodent army into his own rocket.

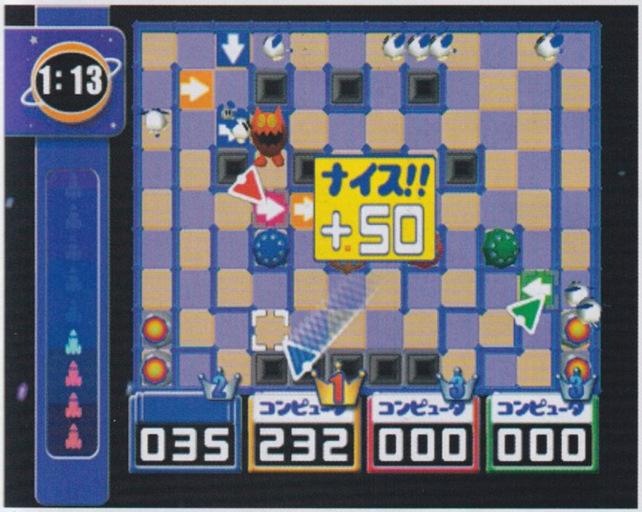
In a fine example to the masses rising up against an evil despot, the arrival of more cats sees Chewy, Matt and Kris pooling their skills to push as many as possible into Doug's rocket, almost wiping out his score.

The collapse of social order follows shortly afterwards, as Doug resorts to a combination of swearing and throwing random objects around the room. This proves to be his most winning tactical move so far, and in the ensuing mêlée he scrapes a win.

The third game turns into a ninja-like exhibition of mental and physical dexterity, with all four players reaching a higher plane of wisdom. (There is some debate as to whether, as when using the Force, they could play blindfold.)

Kris takes an early lead, spiriting chu-chus away from Doug before a sudden cat attack leaves him bereft and broken. Matt sneakily builds up his score as the others are distracted by some flamboyant moves from Chewy,

"I'D CONSIDER BUYING A DREAMCAST PURELY FOR THIS"
– CHEWY



△ Make sure you always lure the special chu-chus (worth 50 normal ones) into your rocket.

モードセレクト
ヘルプ
4プレイヤーバトル 1~4P
チームバトル 1~4P
ステージチャレンジ 1~2P
パズル 1P
パズルエディット
ネットワーク 1~4P
ホームページ
オプション
4人で対戦！
/✚で選択
Ⓐ/△で決定

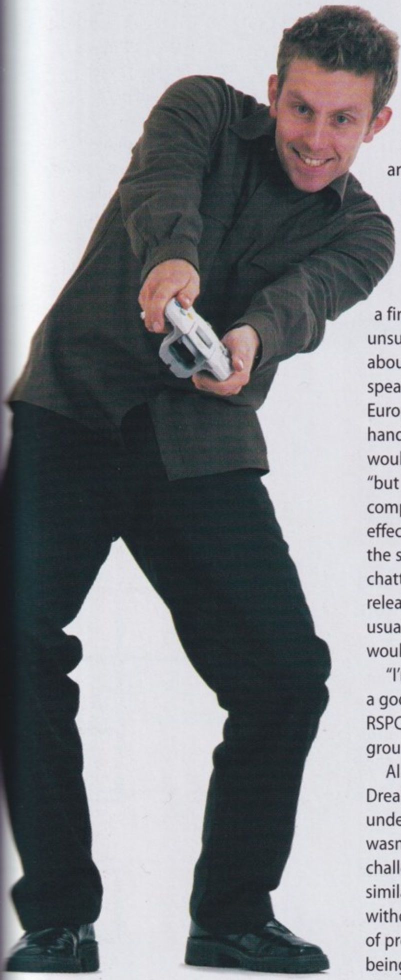
△ **Can't read Japanese? Just guess, then.**

0:01
2
コンピュータ
コンピュータ
コンピュータ
130
011
017
041

△ **You can even play with little *Sonic* chaos!**

"IT'S MORE FUN THAN ANY OTHER FOUR-PLAYER I'VE PLAYED"

– MATT



but as the time ticks down it's Doug who emerges as the winner, leaving our microcosm of society with a new leader (albeit one who may need an armour-plated back when participating in future battles).

IMPROVEMENTS

Although our players are handy with a pair of chopsticks and have a fine breadth of Manga knowledge, unsurprisingly their first suggestion about the game is for an English-speaking version, though Kris is wary of European translators being too heavy handed. "Converting the text to English would be a good start," he concedes, "but I think the game could easily be completely ruined by using crap sound effects and boring language. I'd leave the sounds and the excited Japanese chattering well alone. Even if they released it in Japanese and just put the usual misleading leaflet in everyone would still buy it."

"I'm not sure if *Mouse Rocket* is such a good name," comments Matt. "The RSPCA may object on Guy Fawkes night grounds."

All four of the group felt that Dreamcast's capacities had been underused by the game. Chewy felt it wasn't very graphically or musically challenging: "You could probably get a similar looking game for the Megadrive without actually losing much in the way of presentation. This game isn't about being visually stunning though, it's about being stupidly addictive. I'd actually consider buying a Dreamcast purely for this game".

Matt is slightly more critical: "I think there could have been a bigger playing area on the screen. The players' scores and the time bar take up too much room, which is a bit distracting, particularly if you're losing horribly."

Doug called for more of a 3D element to the game, arguing that "if you could play it on a number of levels you could be a lot more devious, although it's pretty vicious and twisted anyway. A bit more detail on the graphics might be nice though. The only fancy work is on the characters, which are too small for it to really matter."

Kris picks up on this to suggest that there could be greater variety in the icons over the characters with power-ups: "If the magic mice could display a symbol according to what secret power they have it may improve the tactical play, rather than having someone dominate the game simply by being in a fortunate position from the start. Keep the name though."

Chewy, backed by the other three, is in favour of Sega releasing the game in the UK. "Without a shadow of a doubt. It's a simple game with huge playability. I think it will get a slightly different response from the UK gamers to the one it got from the Japanese audience, but I think that's true of all Japanese-style games. It's a distinctly different market, after all. But *Parappa The Rapper* did well enough over here. I think *Chu-Chu Rocket* will become a cult classic."

Kris agrees. "I think once you can play it over the Internet it'll really take off," he enthuses. "That will help to give it an edge over other platforms who are bound to copy it."

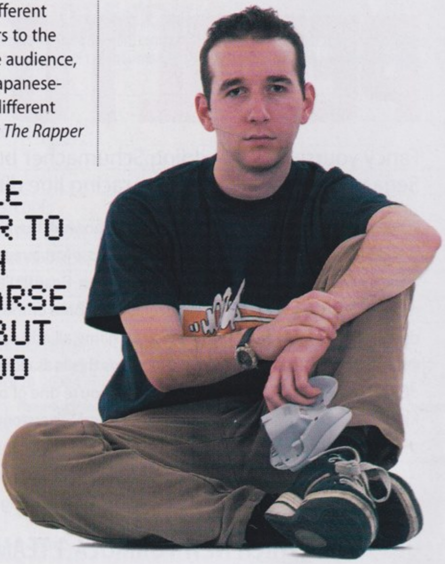
Matt favoured the four-player option over the single- and two-player games: "It's more fun than any other four-player I've played. It was simultaneously the most frustrating and amusing game I've played in ages. It's a great party game, with lots of shouting and back-stabbing to be had."

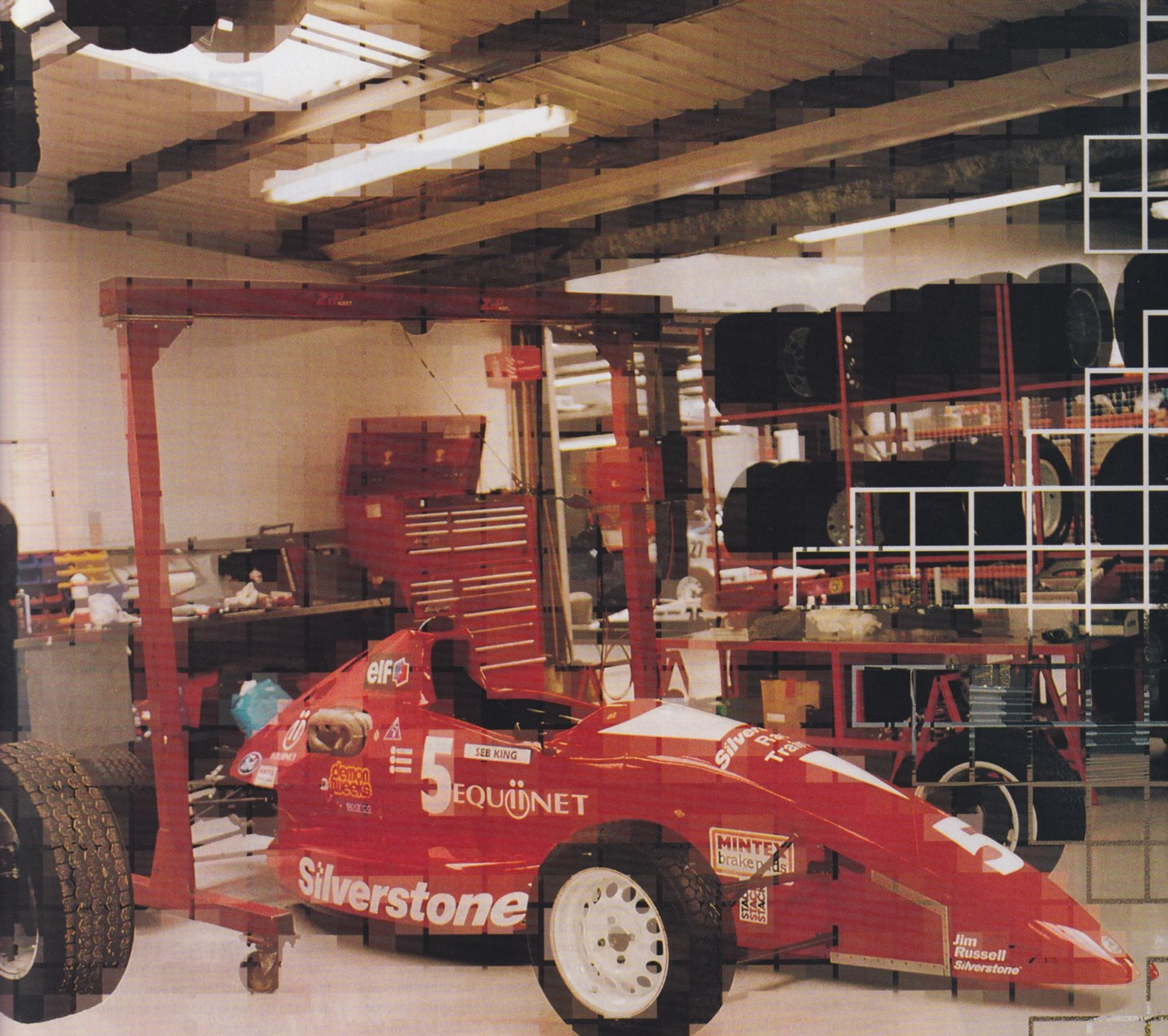
Sega are as yet undecided about when, or if, they'll release the game in this country. Sega's Mark Hartley, told us: "The phenomenal success of *Chu-Chu Rockett* in Japan bodes well for a European release. We're currently looking for the best time to utilise its Internet function. *Chu-Chu Rocket* will appeal to anyone lucky enough to get their hands on it."

Kris has the last word on the game: "It's something of a cross between *Twister* and *One Man And His Dog*. I couldn't have been more excited about this game if you'd told me you were going to dip me in chocolate and throw me to the lesbians." ◘

"IT'S A SIMPLE IDEA, EASIER TO GRASP THAN BUILDER'S ARSE CLEAVAGE, BUT IT'S JUST TOO FAST"

– KRIS





PEDAL TO THE METAL!

Fancy yourself as a budding Schumacher but haven't got the readies? Never fear, thanks to *ODM* and Sega you could be taking the racing line direct to Silverstone for a day of high-octane driving action.

WHETHER YOU'RE A FULL-ON FORMULA 1 fanatic or not, there's no denying that *F1 World Grand Prix for Dreamcast* is the most impressive console Grand Prix game ever seen. Beautifully rendered cars, a full grid, real-life events and some of the most detailed tracks ever to grace a computer game all add up to an amazing driving experience. For most of us this is as close to driving a racing car as we'll ever get but if you're one of our six lucky winners, you too could be racing around Silverstone under the expert eye of some of best racing drivers in the country.

As well as driving at white-knuckle speeds without wide-eyed passengers screaming in terror at you, the day-long prize has an emphasis on translating the skills you learn to more everyday situations, enabling you to become a safer driver. But never mind that, think about getting behind the wheel of everything from Peugeot 306 GTIs to single-seat Formula Fords. Plus you'll get a session in the special skid car to teach you the handling skills you'll need. Once at Silverstone, the full VIP treatment will be laid on, and you'll even get to keep your driving overalls as a memento of the day to accompany the complimentary photos and certificates. To win this superb prize all you have to do is answer the question below and sit and cross your fingers with your driving gloves at the ready…

QUESTION: WHICH NEW FORMULA 1 TEAM WILL EDDIE IRVINE BE DRIVING FOR IN THIS YEAR'S GRAND PRIX WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS? A) SKODA B) JAGUAR C) ROLLS ROYCE

IMAGE: ADAM HAYES/LUMLEY

WIN!
A DAY AT SILVERSTONE UP FOR GRABS!

PEDAL TO THE METAL

Just answer the question, complete the coupon and post it (or a photocopy, or a postcard with all the information requested) to the address shown below.

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RE:VIEWS

IT'S OUT NEXT WEEK, DEFINITELY. DID I SAY NEXT WEEK? OH, I MEANT NEXT MONTH. NEXT MONTH? WHO TOLD YOU THAT? IT'S NOT COMING OUT NEXT MONTH...

DELAYS: GOOD OR BAD THINGS? Bad – no question about it, right? We want our games, and we want them now. Actually, we want them sooner than 'now', we want them 'then', goddamnit!

Whoah, hang on there just a minute, buster. Frustrating though delays to game releases may be, surely they're not just there to wind us up? There must be a reason for games we were promised last October not turning up until… well, that's anybody's guess.

Some delays *do* make sense, however – some delays *are* good. Take *Metropolis Street Racer* for example. Originally planned as a UK Dreamcast launch game, it's now not going to be hitting the shelves until April this year… hopefully. The reason we're not getting in the least bit annoyed about this half-year setback is that we know it's going to be infinitely better than it would have been had it been put out last October. We may have to wait a little longer for some titles than we originally expected, but it's often worth it.

Then there are those delays that don't make sense. Good old *Sega Bass Fishing*, for example. It was finished and ready for release way back in October last year, but due to circumstances too bizarre to even warrant contemplation, hardly any copies have made it into UK homes yet (see page 25 for more information). And there are plenty more games which have, for no obviously sensible reason, had their release dates pushed back by months, even after they're completely finished.

In each issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* we review games due on sale in the same month as the magazine itself – or at least that's the plan. To the best of our knowledge at the time of going to press, those games will all hit the shelves to coincide with our reviews. Unfortunately, unexplained slippages in release dates catch us by surprise and frustrate us just as much as they do you. We apologise in advance if we end up reviewing games months before you get chance to buy them, but we're honestly not doing it deliberately. We'd also like to pass the buck and encourage you to blame the game publishers for letting releases slip. It's not our fault. Cheers. So, while you may be upset that you weren't playing *Crazy Taxi* in January, you'll soon shut your snivelling face when you realise just how fantastic it is. One of the arcade's most impressive titles translated to perfection, with masses of ingenious Dreamcast-only features and, on top of that, another top-quality PAL version especially for European gamers. Certainly worth the wait.

And *NBA 2K* – a basketball game with the kind of graphics we once thought would never be possible, and gameplay that will endear the sport to even those who hate watching the real thing. *NBA 2K*'s well worth the wait as well.

We've also finally got our hands on *Red Dog* – the futuristic buggy-based action game – from the creators of the Super Nintendo classic *Starwing* – that's had its development time extended repeatedly over the past year. Unfortunately the extra time doesn't seem to have helped things much, as you'll see when you read our review. Also check out the playable demo on our cover disc if you haven't done so already.

A bit of a mixed bag this issue, then. A small mixed bag, true, but it's one with two particularly lovely treats waiting for us at the bottom. Just as long as it doesn't get a hole and they fall out and roll down a drain or something…

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE...

CRAZY TAXI (SEGA)	66
NBA 2K (SEGA)	78
RED DOG (SEGA)	74
SLAVE ZERO (INFOGRAMES)	84

ODM RATINGS

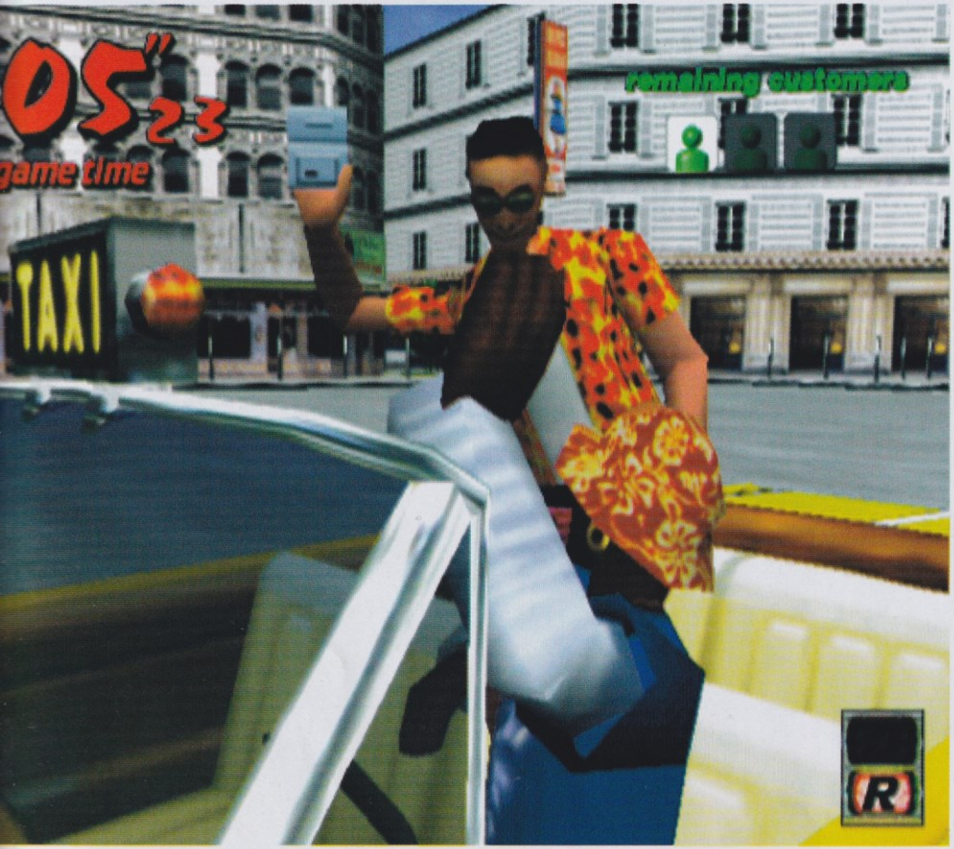
A guide to *Official Dreamcast Magazine's* stringent scoring system. If we say a game is no good, then it ain't worth buying. If it is, it is. Simple, really

10 PERFECT! A GAME WHICH EVERYONE *MUST* OWN. 9 AN ESSENTIAL BUY. GET IT, GET IT, GET IT! 8 EXCELLENT STUFF. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. 7 A GREAT GAME WITH A MINOR PROBLEM OR TWO. 6 GOOD BUT WITH AT LEAST ONE MAJOR SHORTCOMING. 5 STRICTLY AVERAGE, RUN-OF-THE-MILL STUFF. 4 BELOW AVERAGE. PLAY BEFORE YOU BUY! 3 OH DEAR, OH DEAR. THIS REALLY ISN'T VERY GOOD. 2 THE GAMING EQUIVALENT OF LEYTON ORIENT. 1 NOT WORTH THE PLASTIC IT'S PRESSED ON!

1NOM155

CRAZY TAXI

Totally overpriced and won't take you the distance. That's cabs for you. So is Sega's insane whizz through the taxi biz authentic? **TOM GUISE** takes a crosstown trip



△ The way your cabbie interacts with the game's inhabitants makes *Crazy Taxi*'s city feel all the more lifelike.

ESSENTIAL

SEGA MAKE GREAT ARCADE GAMES. In fact, most of the time they make the best. But what is their secret recipe? Amazing technology is a vital ingredient. They're forever wheeling out incredible new hardware just to make their games look better than anyone else's. And they've got the experience. Their arcade development teams have been on the job since the business was born, so getting the gameplay spot-on is probably as easy for the old boys as sucking eggs. At a guess. But there's one other factor to every Sega arcade feast that makes them irresistible. The concepts are just so damned simple.

Everyone understands them, everyone can play them. *Virtua Fighter, Sega Rally, Sega Bass Fishing* – all bold, no-nonsense ideas, so straightforward they even sound a bit too matter-of-fact. Well here's another. It doesn't take a genius to work out what *Crazy Taxi*'s pitch is. You go loco in a limo!

MENTALLY TAXI-ING

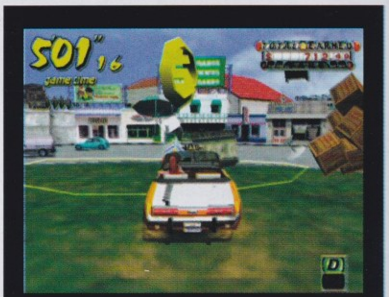
Crazy Taxi has been a massive hit in the arcades. And all the reasons for its out-patient appeal apply the moment you rev up your Dreamcast motor-for-hire. It looks utterly manic, it plays utterly manic and it is totally hilarious. The concept of being lunatically let loose behind the wheel of a taxi is a very obvious draw, but the scale of the madness served up here is far more than any sane mind can comprehend. This is unlike any other driving experience. The time limit you're up against in *Crazy Taxi* is the patience of your incessantly complaining passengers.

There's no speedometer – the only clock you keep glancing at is your fare meter. Driving like some Formula One hero doesn't mean shit either, it's like steering a rocket-powered dodgem on rollerskates. Just as well then, that you vent your fury by carving a trail of destruction throughout a whole city. More frenzied than any movie car chase, it's vaguely worrying how much you embrace the madness – trying to mow down any pedestrians you can.

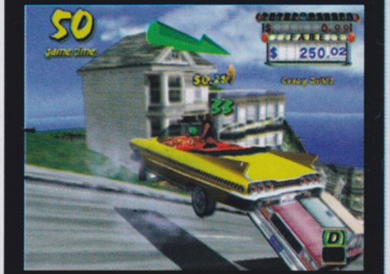
STIMULATE YOURSELF

Of course, instant gratification is all fine and well – just ask any naked psychopath locked in a padded cell. But

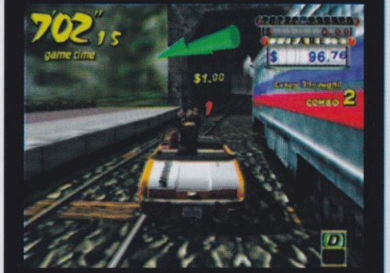
> "MORE FRENZIED THAN ANY MOVIE CAR CHASE. IT'S WORRYING HOW YOU EMBRACE THE MADNESS"



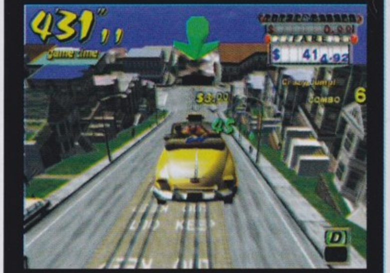
△ **CRAZY DASH:** Shift into reverse, then ram into drive while slamming on the accelerator.



△ **CRAZY DRIFT:** The ultimate powerslide. Turn to the left or right sharply while doing a Crazy Dash.



△ **CRAZY THROUGH:** Take daring routes through tight gaps to earn extra tips from your passenger.

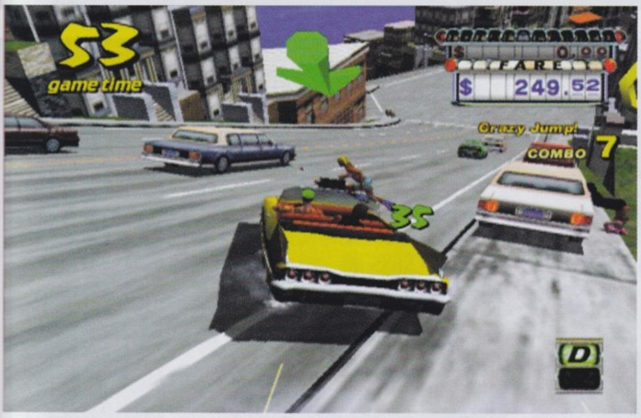


△ **CRAZY JUMP:** Do a Crazy Dash off any handy ramp, roof or speed bump to get some radical air.

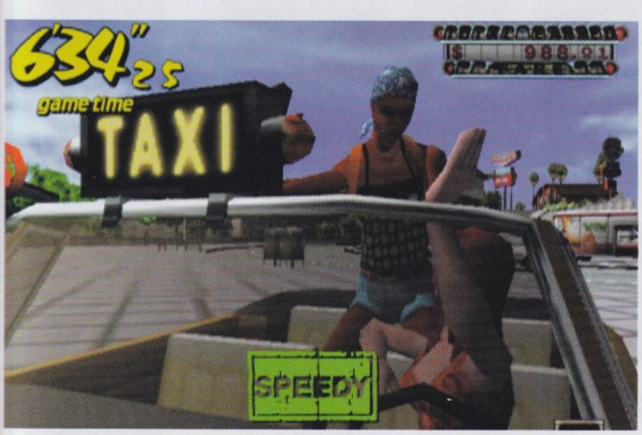
SKILLS TO PAY THE BILLS

Two pedals and a forward/reverse gear shift. That's the *Crazy Taxi* coin-op. All easily represented on the Dreamcast pad. But driving Crazy-style isn't like taking a spin on your usual racer. There are tricks you can pull to help get around quicker, plus they knock extra tips out of your passenger. Keep up the stunts and you can rack up massive score multipliers!

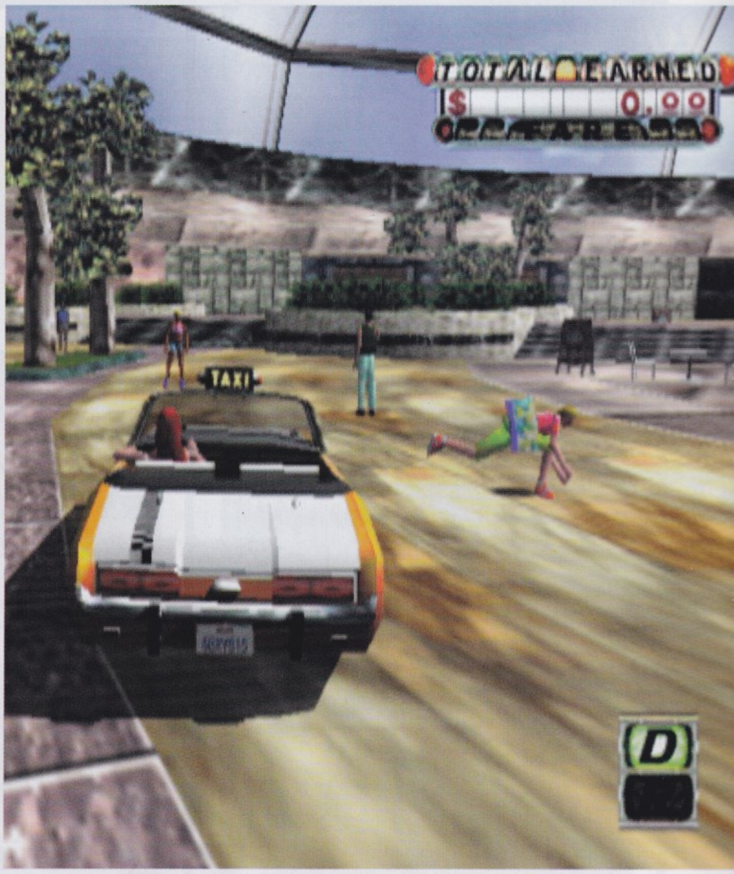
game time
TAXI



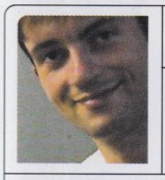
△ No matter how close you get to pedestrians there's no chance of hitting them, thankfully.



△ Everyone you pick up has their own personality, which adds masses of variety to the game.



△ You can drive just about anywhere in the cities – even through busy shopping malls like this.



SPEAK OUT

CRAZY TAXI'S EUROPEAN PRODUCER, **JOSE ALLER**, TOOK TIME OUT TO ANSWER A FEW OF OUR QUESTIONS

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?

Well, I like to think that a lot of effort has gone into adding many extra features to the Dreamcast version. Some are obvious from the start and others will be discovered as the player progresses. More importantly it is also I think a uniquely styled driving game which stands out from the crowd.

WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?

***Rayman 2* is currently getting a fair bit of attention.**

WHAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING CONVERSATION YOU'VE EVER HAD WITH A TAXI DRIVER?

I once had a very interesting conversation with a cabby who suspected his wife was having an affair while he worked his night shifts! Strange but true!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE 2D GAME OF ALL TIME?

This is a familiar question asked around the office often, and even with friends. It is really difficult to pick one, but one of my favourites is still *Nemesis*.

WHO'S YOUR FAVOURITE PASSENGER IN *CRAZY TAXI*?

Grandma J. Very feisty and rude for her age!

"THIS GAME'S NOT INSANE, IT'S PRE-MEDITATED"

the elements that make any coin-op so brilliant aren't guaranteed to make it worth owning. Not so long ago, making a game 'arcade perfect' was all it took to make an A-grade title. With Dreamcast using the same hardware as Sega's top-end Naomi arcade machines (of which *Crazy Taxi* is one), it now comes as standard issue. In fact, early Dreamcast conversions being arcade-perfect have recently had quite the opposite effect. Coin-op smash-hits like *Sega Bass Fishing* and *Virtua Fighter 3tb* fail to keep their appeal in the long run.

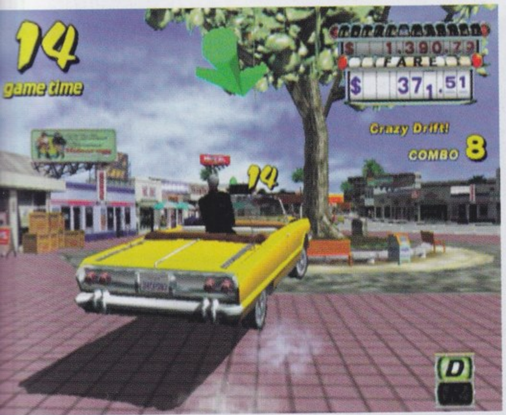
Initially, *Crazy Taxi* seems the same. Surely there's only so long you can have fun driving around, picking people up and dropping them off (although some cabbies will tell you they've been doing it for 20 years). But there is more to *Crazy Taxi* and it lies in its Crazy skills (see separate box). To start with, pulling off the clever boosts and slides seems too tough to bother with, and unnecessary. But soon you find yourself using them to dazzling effect (especially to an audience). But it's the reason for doing them that makes the game addictive. Pulling off crazy combos to rack up massive tips adds method to the game's madness. Like all great games – or even sports – you want to be the best.You want to be the one clocking up a 28-combo Crazy Drift, and ranking higher than your friends in the *Crazy Taxi* hall-of-fame. This game's not insane, it's pre-meditated.

LIFE INSIDE

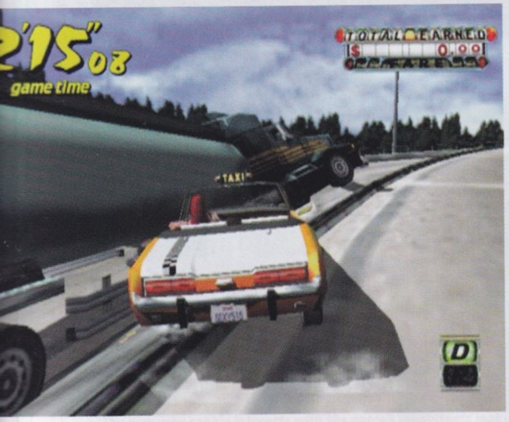
And there's another shade to *Crazy Taxi* that makes it almost criminal as simply an arcade fix. The city. Yeah, it's big and it's got loads of shops and cool locations. Yeah, there's loads of cars driving about. Yeah, there's people in it and they talk and run about. Well look again. There aren't just shops, there are phone boxes, newspaper dispensers, there's a police station with parked cop cars. There are traffic signs, little billposters stuck to lampposts. There aren't 'just' cars, there are vehicles that stop at junctions, indicate before pulling away, brake to give you right of way. The cable car system works properly, cars pull out of the car park, a helicopter circles the heliport. And there are so many types of people.

They wave at you, snorkel in the sea – peep in the tennis court and there's even a couple playing a match! Drop off the man with the flowers at the park and he runs off to meet his date. It's almost as convincing as the fake reality from the *Truman Show*. Noticing this

▷



△ Looks like the vicar could be in for a nasty accident here.



△ Not even juggernauts can stop a dedicated cabbie!

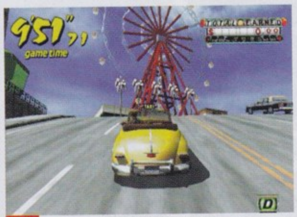
▷ fantastic attention to detail in the arcades would have cost you a small fortune.

HOT IN THE CITY

One of the most appealing factors to *Crazy Taxi* is the mood of the whole game. With a theme based around dangerous driving and the chance to mow people down, you'd think, at the very least, it would be questionable in the eyes of gaming watchdogs. However, *Crazy Taxi* avoids any such conceptions by simply being light-hearted fun. There's no carnage as such. The crowds of fleeing people and destruction of scenery is more like the madcap street stunts from films like *Herbie Goes Bananas*. In fact the only things missing are the fire hydrants and two guys carrying a large window pane (maybe in the sequel). It's pure comedy, with no suggestion of sinister motives. And trying to mow anyone down is utterly impossible anyway – the pedestrians *always* manage to jump, run or dive out of the way just in the nick of time.

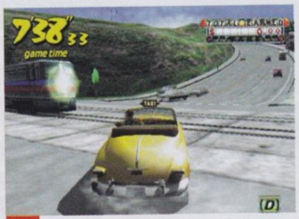
Adding to this light-hearted feel, is the super-sunny San Francisco-esque look and feel of both cities, and in fact it makes you feel positively cheery. The graphics are utterly fantastic and the layouts of the cities are amazingly convincing too. You might even want to live there. Seeing the packed beaches, the chilled out restaurant areas, the cable car lazily climbing the hills, all bathed in convincing Dreamcast blue skies – it's a

ALL-NEW SIGHTS TO SEE



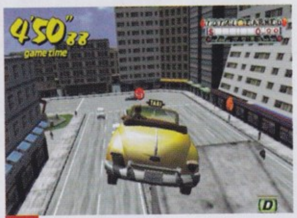
1 THE MILLENNIUM WHEEL

Authentic to the London Eye – it doesn't seem to move around either.



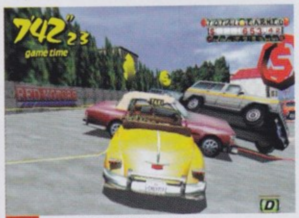
2 RAIL CROSSING

There are two full working train networks in this city. Watch out for them at the crossing.



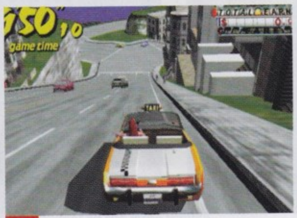
3 RIDING HIGH

There's loads of roofs to drive over in the business area. Nice view on the way down.



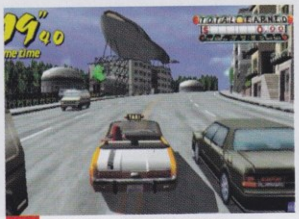
4 THE USED CAR LOT

Initially you'll just trash this place, but drive punters through for loads of Crazy Throughs.



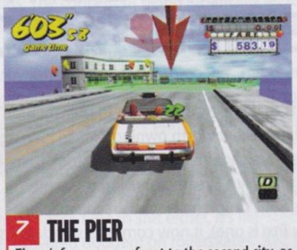
5 STREETWISE

There's loads more street networks in this city. Getting lost is a definite possibility.



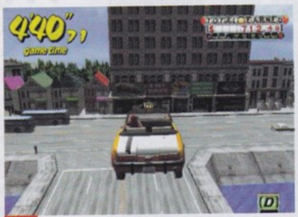
6 THE MARINE MUSEUM

Guaranteed to have a whale of a time here. Hahaha!



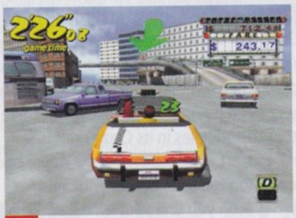
7 THE PIER

There's far more seafront to the second city, as you'll find out when you fall in.



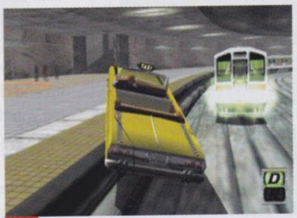
8 CLEAR WATERS

You can learn to use the open bridge as an aerial ramp to clear low buildings.



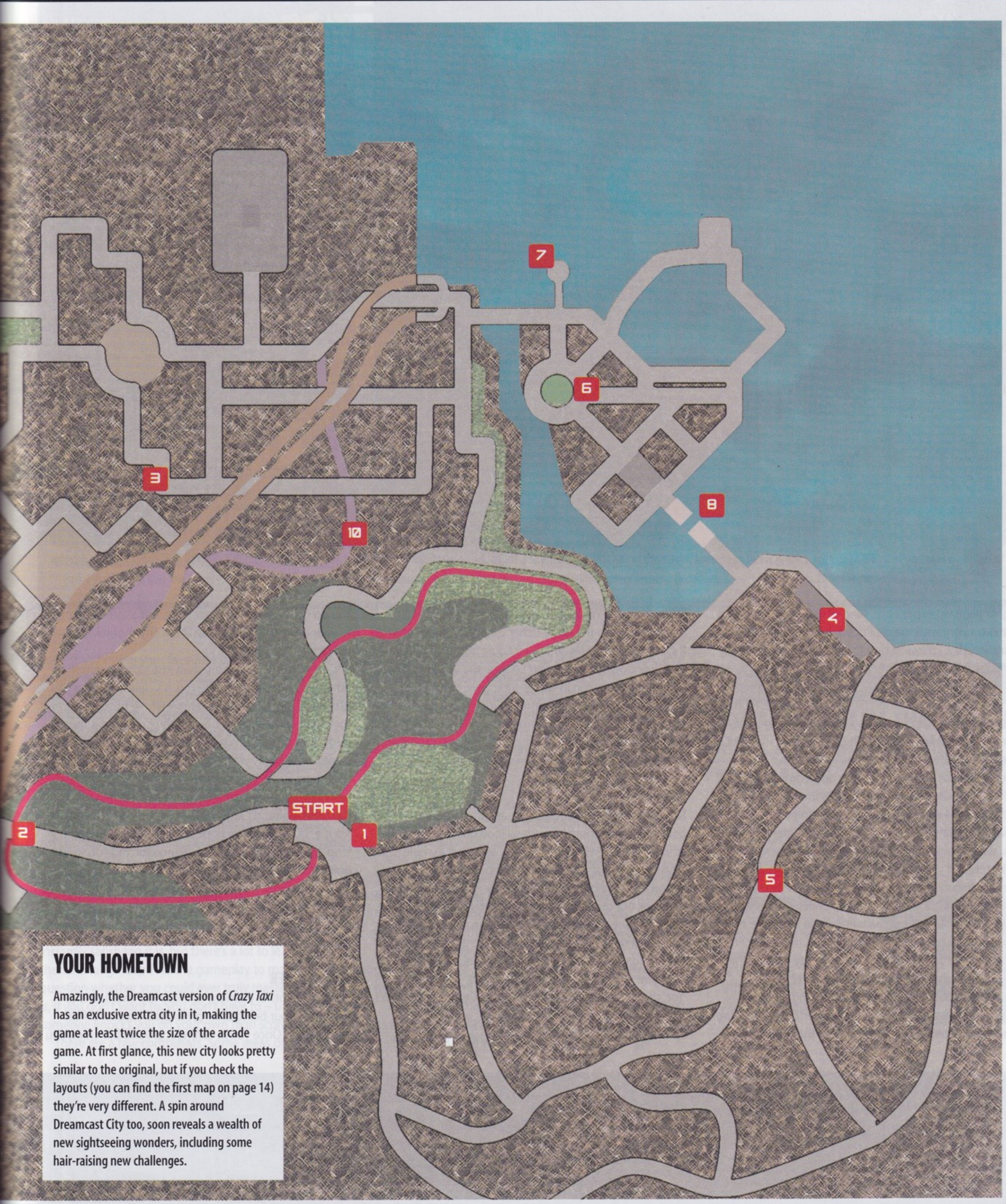
9 FLYOVER-LOAD

These busy flyovers take you above building height. And yes, you can drop onto them!



10 QUICKER BY TUBE

Amazingly, there's multiple tube and rail stations throughout the city to race through.



YOUR HOMETOWN

Amazingly, the Dreamcast version of *Crazy Taxi* has an exclusive extra city in it, making the game at least twice the size of the arcade game. At first glance, this new city looks pretty similar to the original, but if you check the layouts (you can find the first map on page 14) they're very different. A spin around Dreamcast City too, soon reveals a wealth of new sightseeing wonders, including some hair-raising new challenges.

3'26"53
game time
TOTAL EARNED
$ 712.49
FARE
$ 522.69
Crazy Jump!
COMBO 2
16
D

△ "Ping! We would like to remind you that driving is not permitted anywhere in the station. Thank you for your co-operation."

4'25"31
game time
TAXI
D

△ Do a few doughnuts to clear a nice sunbathing space.

3'33"48
game time
TAXI
D

△ *Crazy Taxi*'s police don't seem to care about reckless driving.

▷ highly pleasant experience. Kind of like cruising around in the country with the roof down on an awesome summers day. Followed by a crazy burn through a busy shopping precinct…

The West Coast USA atmosphere is further enhanced by the superb conversation pieces in the game. From your chilled out cabbies calling irate passengers "too energetic" or telling them to "move yo butt!" it all has a real surfer attitude to it. Even the grannies have clearly been voiced by someone putting on a comical falsetto. It's very amusing. What's particularly impressive though, is the way the speech works. After hailing your cab down (or yelling as you ignore them), the passengers tell you where to go, screaming if you head the wrong way, or lecturing if you drive dangerously. Their personalities are convincing enough to upset you when they kick dust at your car and call you rubbish, or cheer you up when they say you're the best. Certainly some of the best speech so far heard in any game.

In fact, the sound in the game is pretty excellent all round. From the sounds of the chopper circling somewhere above, to the trains chugging in the distance. Even the music fits the bill perfectly. Providing you like the sound of American skate punk. The Offspring's All I Want and Bad Religion's Ten in 2010 blare out during the titles. Other tunes from both groups include Them and Us and Inner Logic from Bad Religion, and Way Down The Line and Change the World by The Offspring, all playing in-game. Strangely, these skate sounds just emphasis how much *Crazy Taxi* is like a skateboard game, as you learn better skills and tricks. If all this means nothing to you, or worse – you can't stand those bands – don't worry, you can turn the music off.

HOME FRIED

Regardless of all the detail in the arcade game, you've still got to have your home features. Good ones too. And, as you can see elsewhere in this review, there's a whole new city and the Crazy Box mode. Whoop-dee-do! Doesn't sound like a lot, but the sum is greater than the parts.

Check out our *Crazy Taxi* feature (starting on page 8) and you'll see the first city is shaped near enough like a big loop. For the arcades this was perfect. While having the illusion of being a complex metropolis it actually kept you racing around in one direction. The better you got, the further you ventured around. Getting lost wasn't a huge factor. The Dreamcast-only city is far more complex and the citizens send you back and forth more. You do get lost, but there are excellent alternative routes to your destinations. The result is a city that takes time to learn and appreciate.

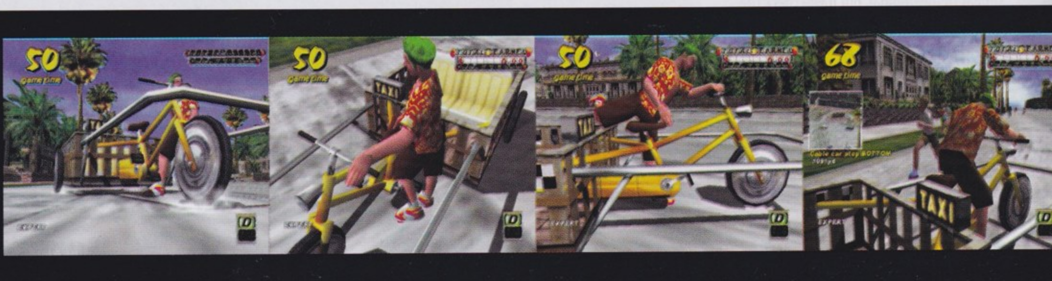
Crazy Box mode is more than just a cheap rehash of other elements of the game too. It's clear the more you play basic *Crazy Taxi* that there's a whole host of amazing tricks you can use, even beyond the drifts and jumps. Dedicated arcade fans will have found these, and *Taxi*'s creators obviously wanted to acknowledge these techniques – and train up a new wave of cabbies. For example, while you can even wipe out juggernauts in the cities, you can't knock down lampposts. A mistake? Maybe, but they prove perfect props for an emergency stop. Hence the Crazy Box challenge forcing you to use poles to brake. Likewise, the water-jumping ramp race trains you up for the new pier-based areas of the Dreamcast city. A genuine mode you'll keep tackling and one that you'll play almost *Track & Field*-like to beat your friends' scores.

CABBY FEVER

There's one other element to *Crazy Taxi* that starts to permeate your being after prolonged exposure. Real cabby fever! Once you're caning it around the cities, you

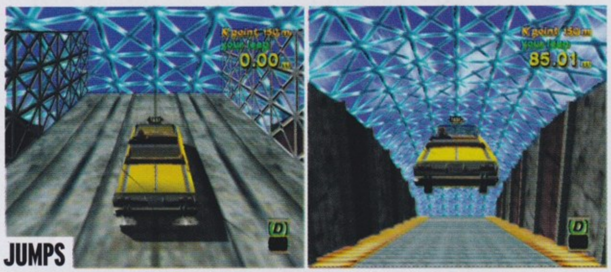
BIKING MAD!

The secret taxi from the arcade game is in the Dreamcast version too – a rickshaw! It has incredible acceleration and braking, and really tight steering. Problem is, it's very light, so expect to go flying. There are plenty more secrets to come…

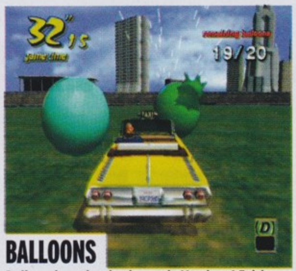


BOX CLEVER

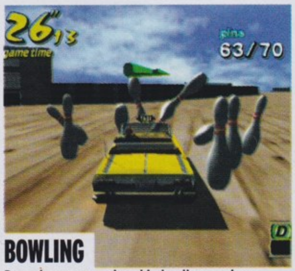
You've had a few goes, you've tasted your first Crazy Drift. Now unleash your madness and find out what you're really capable of. Crazy Box mode throws some lunatic challenges at you, and to beat them, you've got master the various crazy styles. A mini high-score game in its own right, and training for your journey to the big city, here's a few examples of what inside… The Box.



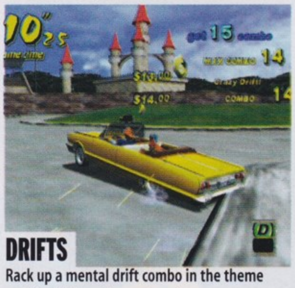
JUMPS
Just like an enormous olympic ski jump ramp. In this Crazy Box challenge you have to use Crazy Dashes to propel yourself off the end to get as much distance as you possibly can.



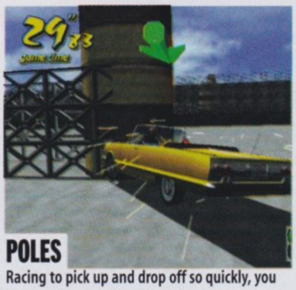
BALLOONS
Balloon bursting in the park. You brat! Fairly easy, once you learn tight turning circles.



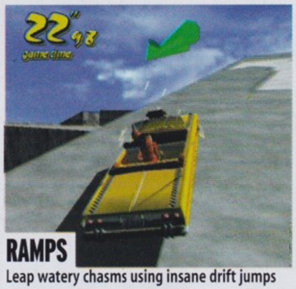
BOWLING
Race down a massive skittle alley scoring strikes on giant bowling pins. Very hard and surely only for destructive means.



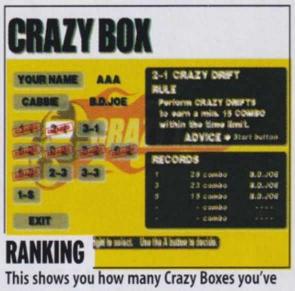
DRIFTS
Rack up a mental drift combo in the theme park by sliding all over the place.



POLES
Racing to pick up and drop off so quickly, you have to slam into lampposts to stop!



RAMPS
Leap watery chasms using insane drift jumps and tenuously placed ramps. Expert stuff.


CRAZY BOX

YOUR NAME AAA
CABBIE B.D.JOE
3-1
2-3 3-3
1-S
EXIT

2-1 CRAZY DRIFT
RULE
Perform CRAZY DRIFTS to earn a min. 15 COMBO within the time limit.
ADVICE ◆ Start button

RECORDS
1 29 combo B.D.JOE
3 23 combo B.D.JOE
5 15 combo B.D.JOE
- - combo ----
- - combo ----

ght to select. Use the A button to decide.

RANKING
This shows you how many Crazy Boxes you've beaten. Plenty more open as you go.

soon start finding your favourite patches. Hate the busy downtown area? There's nothing more annoying than having to make a drop off there. "Nah mate, not going that way." Suddenly the mental workings of your average taxi driver are opened up to you. And it's not a pretty sight. Only looking for short runs? You won't go picking up any of those long-haul green-lit passengers then. You even develop favourite or despised citizens.

That ginger guy in the green suit? Can't stand him, won't take him. It wouldn't be hard to believe they had real psycho taxi drivers on hand as consultants for this game.

CLOCKING OUT

The bottom line with *Crazy Taxi* is that it is just one brilliant game. Early reservations about its lasting appeal – and we did have them – have proven unfounded. Instantly satisfying it is, but there's a lot to learn. In fact, there's enough depth to the gameplay to make you question whether you could ever truly master it all. Point is, if you don't want to, you don't have to – until someone knocks you off your own high score table.

There are a few complaints. Some areas of the new city have a bit too much graphic pop-up. Not offensively so, but hey, this is Dreamcast. And when it gets really busy at high-speed it can grind up quite a bit, although the arcade version also did this. The big question mark though is why no multiplayer game? The chance to just race around the first city like some Cannonball Run carnage circuit would have been fantastic. And with the second city you could have cordoned off areas to make raceways. The ranking and combos provide a competitive nature, but head-to head would have been the icing.

Gripes aside though, the real factor that stays with you is the sense of awesome fun about *Crazy Taxi*. A lot of Sega's arcade hits like *Virtua Fighter 3* and *Sega Rally 2* have lacked the offbeat wackiness and humour of their earlier hits. Even though this game was made by Sega's AM3 team, it's very reminiscent of the oddball mayhem of AM2's *Daytona USA*. Right down to the slightly loony hidden extras and super stylish presentation.

The result is a game that will impress anyone who sees its incredible visuals. And one that anyone can get into. Definitely a DC title you'd be crazy not to own.

VERDICT

TOP ARCADE GAME THAT'S EVEN MORE AMAZING AT HOME

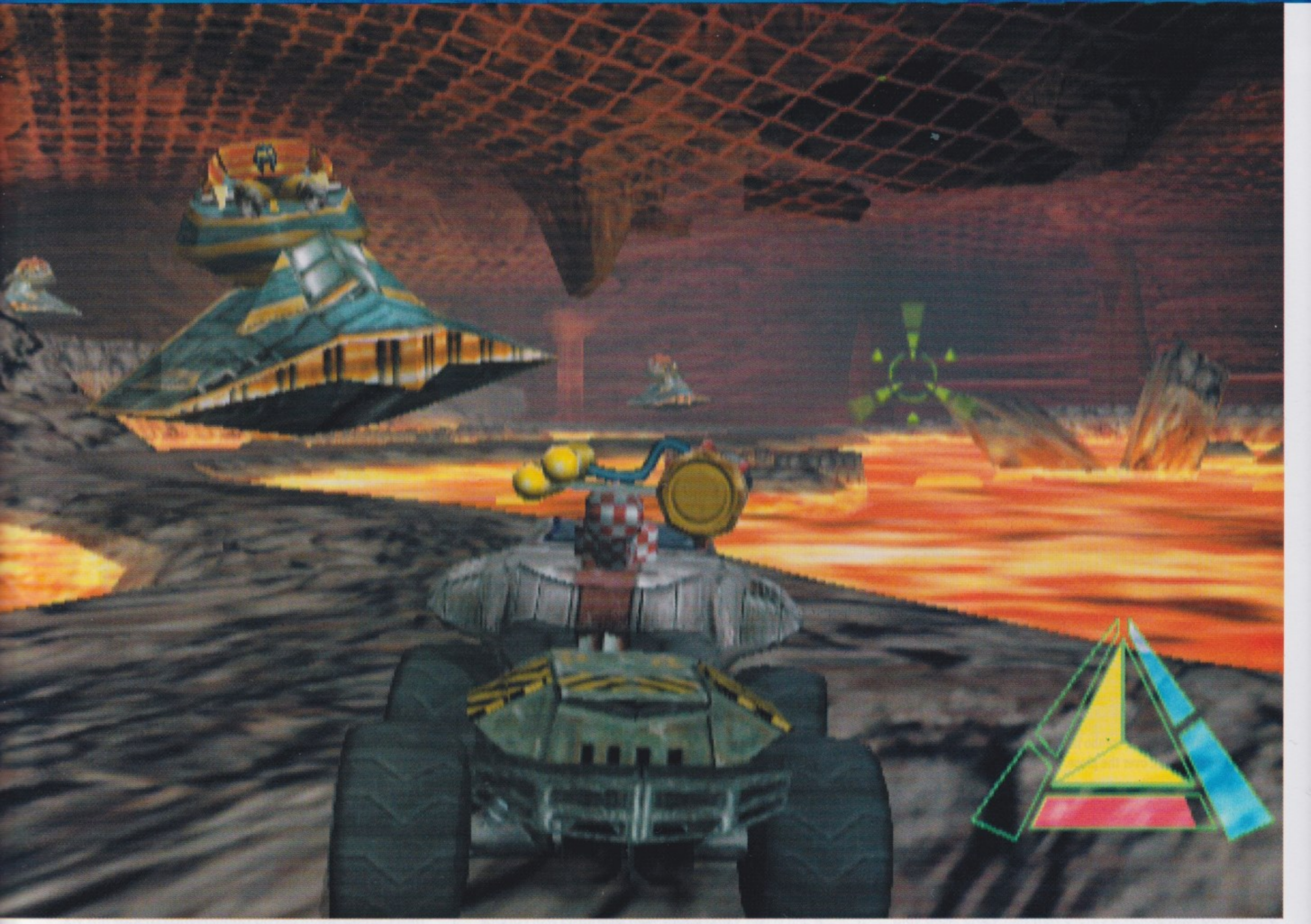
UPPERS
Instantly appealing • Incredible visuals • Good difficulty curve • Fast and full-screen at 50Hz

DOWNERS
No multiplayer modes • New city is slightly rough around the edges

IN ONE HOUR Aim for earnings of around $3,500
WEBSITE www.dreamcast-europe.com
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, full-screen 60Hz option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
9

66
35
32
$ 476.58
Cable car stop BOTTOM
31
10
$ 312.00



△ You don't see that every day.

RED DOG

A game that lets you blast the neighbourhood dogs? Unfortunately not, red or otherwise. **STEVE HILL** is disappointed

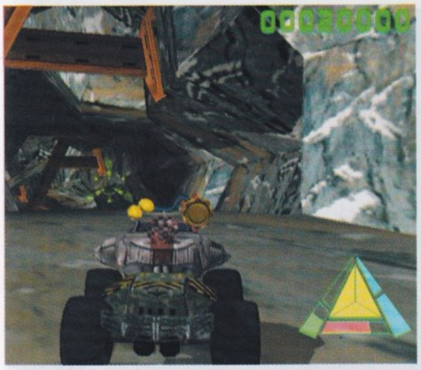
> "IS IT ANY WONDER THAT VIDEOGAMES ARE DISMISSED AS THE PLAYTHINGS OF SIMPLETONS?"

ON THE CD

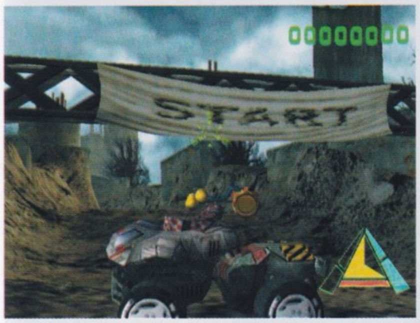
IN ANY DECENT, WELL-ORDERED SOCIETY, all dogs would be killed. The dirty, filthy, yapping, shitting bastards have no place on God's clean earth, and anyone letting their hound empty its back onto a pavement should be imprisoned immediately. Having to remove steaming animal excrement from the sole of your trainers with a lolly stick is an ignominy that no man should have to suffer, and these foul beasts should be eliminated from our planet.

That said, *Red Dog* has absolutely no dogs in it whatsoever. Or even people, for that matter. Nothing if not grossly unoriginal, the game instead has you battling hordes of aliens in an unlikely vision of the near future. Those aliens are the improbably named Ha'ak, and as game scenarios go they might as well have entered some keywords into a random sentence generator and waited to see what dropped out. That said, it's not long since magazines were berating games for even bothering with a story, insisting that they concentrate on the game. The current trend is for games to have bit of tale though, and suffice to say that the one in *Red Dog* is a bit plop.

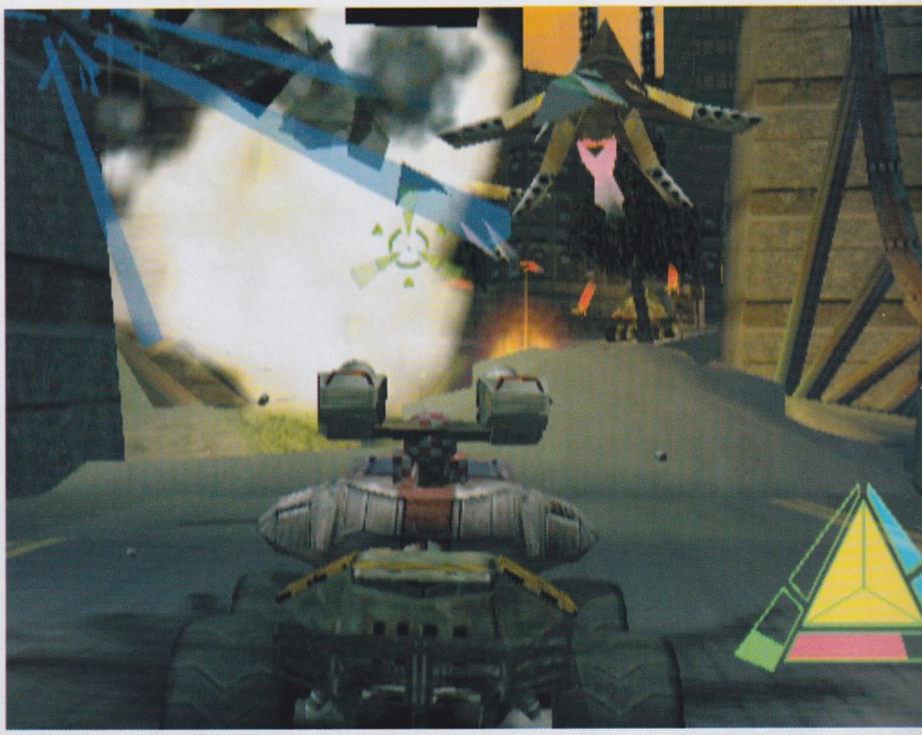
Marauding aliens it is though. So what are you given with which to repel the extra-terrestrial aggressors? A buggy. Otherwise known as the Red Dog Assault Vehicle, it's effectively some kind of off-road four-wheeler with a couple of guns bolted onto it. Like we



△ **That's your buggy, and that green thing is your sight cursor.**



△ **One of the game's 17 optional challenge missions.**



△ ***Red Dog*: it isn't red and there are no dogs in it.**

SPEAK OUT

WE ASKED **SEFTON HILL**, ARGONAUT'S LEAD DESIGNER ON *RED DOG*, SOME PROBING QUESTIONS

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?

It's got to be the multiplayer but that wasn't really a challenge. If you put four players in tanks, with some bad ass weaponry you've already got fun. The thing I'm most happy with is the single player. The way we've brought the pace and the excitement of traditional 2D shooters to a free roaming 3D environment – it hasn't been done so successfully since *Doom*.

WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME (AND IT CAN'T BE YOUR OWN)?

Hmmm, tricky because I'm not a big beat 'em up fan but even I can't deny *Soul Calibur* is fun. I can't wait for *Code: Veronica* and *Crazy Taxi*. And I'm still waiting for the killer footy app – hopefully *ISS* is due soon.

WHAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING CONVERSATION YOU'VE EVER HAD WITH A TAXI DRIVER?

At E^3 a couple of years ago we got in a cab and asked the driver to take us to the nearest warez. Not only did he take us to Toys R Us, he came in and showed us around. Then he took us to a shopping centre and advised us on the presents to get. Then he rushed us back to our hotel to get our flight home. Now that's service. His picture still adorns the walls of the office today. If that doesn't count then I once came out of a club, got in a cab and threw up all over the windscreen. Not much of a conversation but quite memorable.

said, a buggy. So, basically the game involves driving around shooting aliens, which is a notion perilously close to the preconception of videogames that the bulk of the general public has.

In fact, if you were to canvas the opinions of a cross-section of non-gamers, you could almost guarantee that at least one of them would describe games as "driving around shooting aliens". And, in the case of *Red Dog* at least, they'd be absolutely right. Is it any wonder that videogames are often dismissed as the playthings of simpletons, when such unimaginative fare is churned out? It's not exactly advancing the medium, as the chin-strokers would have it.

BURNIN', LOOTIN', DRIVIN', SHOOTIN'

Nevertheless, driving and shooting have been a mainstay of gaming almost since its inception, and they're both perfectly valid activities. Put them together and what have you got? An accomplished blend of genres that offers the best of both worlds, (and that's a question, not a quote), or a mis-match of styles that fails to convince on any level?

Well, let's first consider the driving aspect. As mentioned, what you're faced with is a buggy, and it's viewed from the third person – ie behind. In terms of handling, at least, it's the kind of thing you can imagine Extreme Sports enthusiasts doing, driving over some sand dunes on a late night Channel 5 show, in slow motion and accompanied by the inevitable 'phat' beats. It's also the kind of thing you'd probably stumble across in an ill-conceived off-road racing game.

While the buggy is not exactly the speediest of vehicles, with the aid of the boost function it can be brought up to almost walking pace. The driving model is fairly vague though, with soft suspension and some fairly loose handling. Which would be fine for cruising along a beach, but isn't ideal in the heat of a war against an advanced alien race. If mankind really was to go to war with an alien species, you'd like to think they'd go at it with more than a beach buggy.

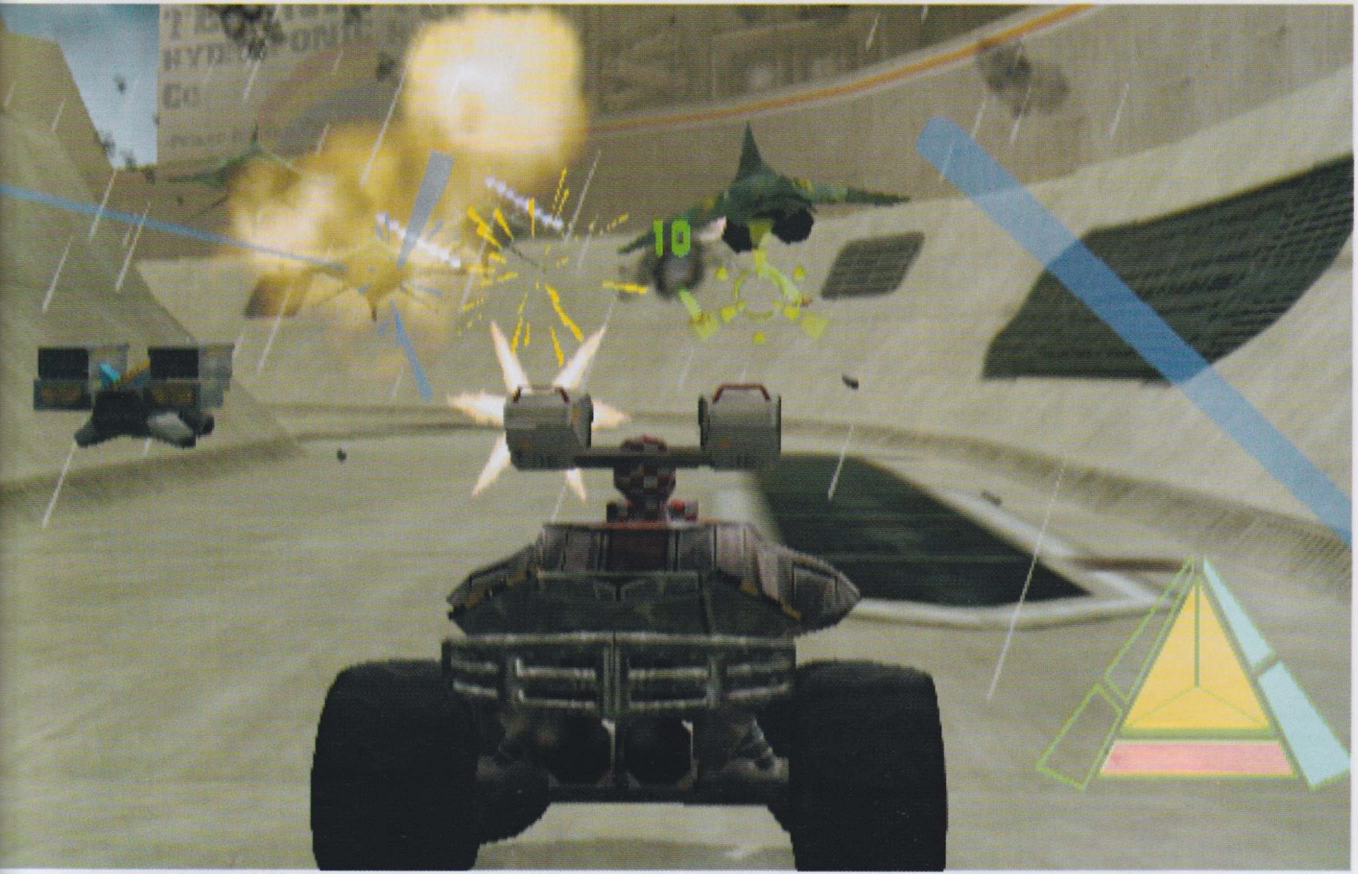
A buggy it is though – but a buggy with guns. There's some primary and secondary shenanigans going on, the former being an initially somewhat insipid gun, and the latter consisting of some fairly illogical homing missiles. Holding down the A button enables you to lock on to one or more enemies, and releasing it unleashes the relevant number of unconvincing missiles heading in their general direction. There's also a shield function which offers protection from incoming missiles, provided they're aimed at the front of your buggy.

The weapon sights are controlled with the analog knob, which allied to the third person view makes for an irksome process, with accuracy at a modicum. It can be fairly disorientating, and sometimes becomes a case of firing constantly and hoping for the best. There is a strafe option, but that involves the buggy turning through 90 degrees and driving backwards and forwards, which not only makes you a bigger target, but is often impractical – if there's lava on either side, for example.

FISH IN A BARREL

As for the aliens themselves, they take many forms, from humble foot soldiers to tanks, planes, assorted assault vehicles and, of course, giant spaceships. Some of them don't actually do a great deal though, often preferring to stand still while you repeatedly shoot them. Possibly not the most intelligent of responses, and one that turns some sections of the game into little more than a

▷



△ **Ba-da-ba-da-ba-da-ba-da-kaboom!**

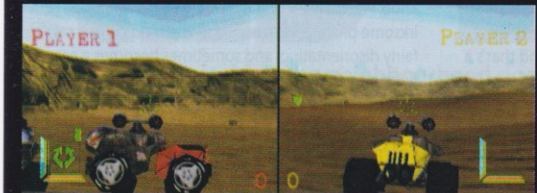
"IT'S CURIOUSLY UNSATISFYING. THE GAME LEAVES YOU FAILING TO CARE FOR EITHER SIDE"

glorified shooting gallery. Some of the enemies are quite literally sitting targets, and make little or no attempt to protect themselves. In fact, some are so thick that they'll simply let you run them over, standing by idly as you crush them under the wheels of your vehicle. However, that's not to say the game is overtly easy, as some sections border on the impossible.

As for the structure of the game, there are six – count 'em – single-player missions which follow a distinctly linear path. Various tasks are involved, such as escorting a bomb to its destination, as well as some timed sections, with a number of set pieces coming into play, such as escaping a rapidly flooding area. There's even a tenuous nod towards platform games, in that you occasionally have to guide your buggy along some narrow sections without falling off the edge – something that can happen with tooth-grinding regularity. There are no instant saves to be had, only a number of pre-set restart points. What this means is that you simply repeat the same sections again and again like a monkey until you get it right.

For a next-generation console, in this sense at least, *Red Dog* is a surprisingly old-school title, and ultimately it boils down to the time-honoured concept of complete the levels and kill the boss. The end-of-level bosses include such treats as a spaceship, a submarine and a boat, although defeating them usually requires nothing more intelligent than constantly pumping them full of lead until their health expires.

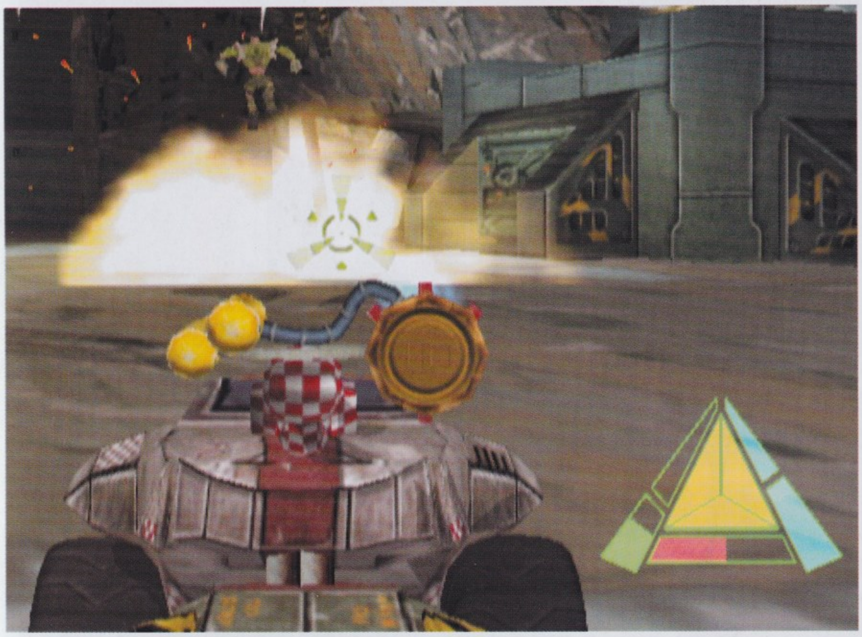
GET THE MATES ROUND – ALL THREE OF THEM



△ The four-player mode moves well, but everything looks a lot less detailed.

Planned to be the first online multiplayer DC game, that plan has been scuppered, and *Red Dog* now supports the default maximum of four players on one console. There's a reasonable selection of arenas available, as well as a host of game types clearly borrowed from the more advanced world of first-person shooters on PC. As well as the basic deathmatch, the options include such games as King Of The Hill, which involves guarding your territory for a set time, and a number of bomb rounds, with players attempting to palm off explosives on to an opponent before they blow up in their face. There's plenty of choice, and while the multiplayer options are by no means unplayable they don't break any new ground.

"GUIDING A BUGGY AROUND IS AT BEST ONLY BORDERLINE ENJOYMENT" **RED DOG**



△ **The little green men take a shoeing.**

Between the regular missions there are 17 optional challenge missions. Essentially these test your abilities at certain skills and then reward you accordingly. So for example a basic driving mission entails something like completing a set course within a certain time, at which point your buggy receives a speed upgrade; a similar system is in place for weaponry. Further tools can be found in the game in the form of pick-ups, which magically become special weapons. There are also what are supposedly wingmen bots in operation, although in reality they're little more than ancillary weapons, and simply offer a little extra firepower.

STEAMING IN

Graphically, *Red Dog* is a bit cartoony, featuring generic spaceships, comedy missiles, and even some spiders that wouldn't look out of place in low-budget Joan Collins movie *Empire Of The Ants*. A fairly liberal approach to the laws of physics has also been taken, and the game simply feels wrong.

For all its shortcomings, *Red Dog* is undeniably something of a challenge, although that is probably as much to do with the irksome interface as with any cunning game design. Caution is usually rewarded, as steaming in with all guns blazing often results in rapid death. When possible, it's sometimes better to hang back and pick off enemies from a distance.

Challenging it might be, involving it isn't. It's a curiously unsatisfying experience, and the game as a whole leaves you failing to care for either side. At no point does it really feel like your life is at stake, and neither do you take any great pleasure in destroying the faceless enemy. 'Immersion' is a word relentlessly bandied about the games industry, and *Red Dog* simply doesn't have it.

With a couple of tweaks, *Red Dog* might have made for an average first-person shoot 'em up, but in opting for the driving/shooting hybrid Argonaut have fallen between two large, steaming stools. Probably the nearest thing to *Red Dog* on Dreamcast is frantic pyrotechnic blaster *Incoming*, which while similar in concept does at least offer a wide variety of vehicles, acceptable pacing, and something approaching atmosphere. Unfortunately *Red Dog* falls short in all areas, and ultimately guiding a buggy round some frankly unsuitable areas is at best only borderline enjoyment.

Unfussy gamers might be able to kill a few hours getting to grips with it, but as for putting your hand in your back pocket and handing over four crisp tenners it's very hard to recommend. So we haven't.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **ARGONAUT**

VERDICT

LOTS OF DRIVING AND SHOOTING, BUT NOT A GREAT DEAL OF FUN

UPPERS
Some explosions and that • Half-decent rain effects • Passable multiplayer

DOWNERS
Only six missions • Irksome control system • Repetitive • Uninspiring bosses

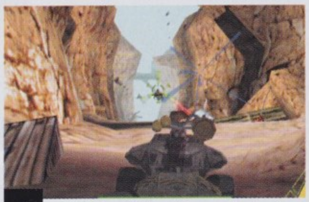
IN ONE HOUR We'd unleashed a torrent of foul and abusive language
WEBSITE www.argonaut.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 60Hz option, VGA-compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
4

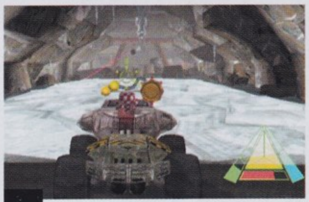
WALKTHROUGH

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

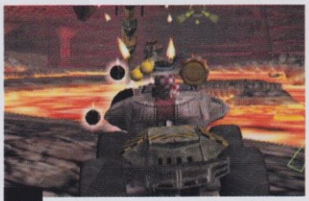
There are six environments to negotiate and here's a smashing picture of each one. We've kept the last one a surprise but it's the alien base



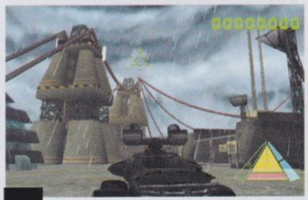
1 **CANYON – This level features loads of canyons, with a discernible *Star Wars* look about them.**



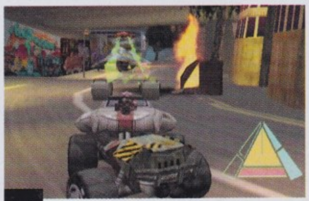
2 **ICE – No surprises, it's a great big world of ice. Now where have we seen that before?**



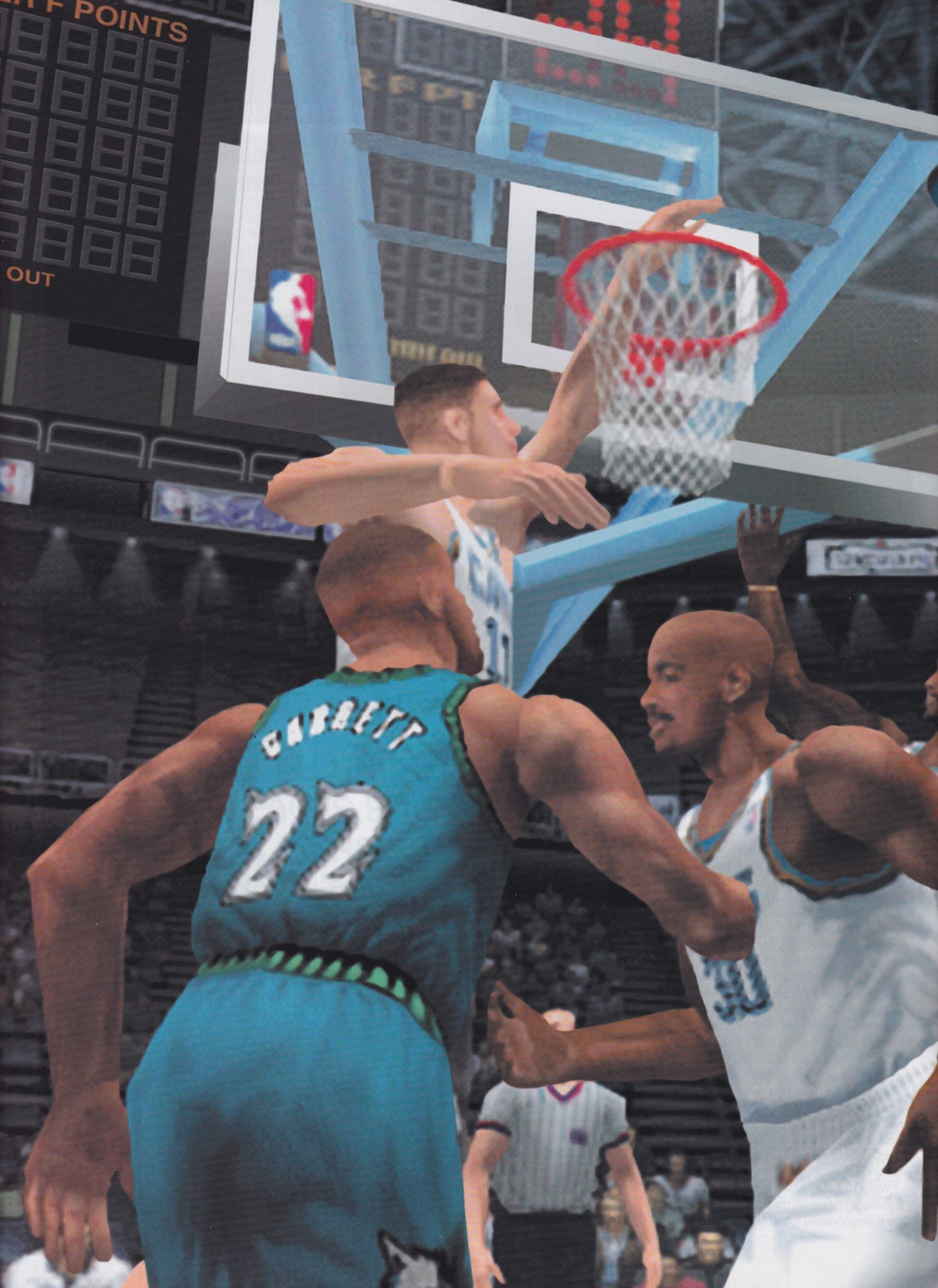
3 **VOLCANO – As quicker readers will by now have guessed, it features a volcano. With lava and everything.**



4 **HYDRO – That's simply a clever word for water, and there's loads of it. Welcome to Hull.**

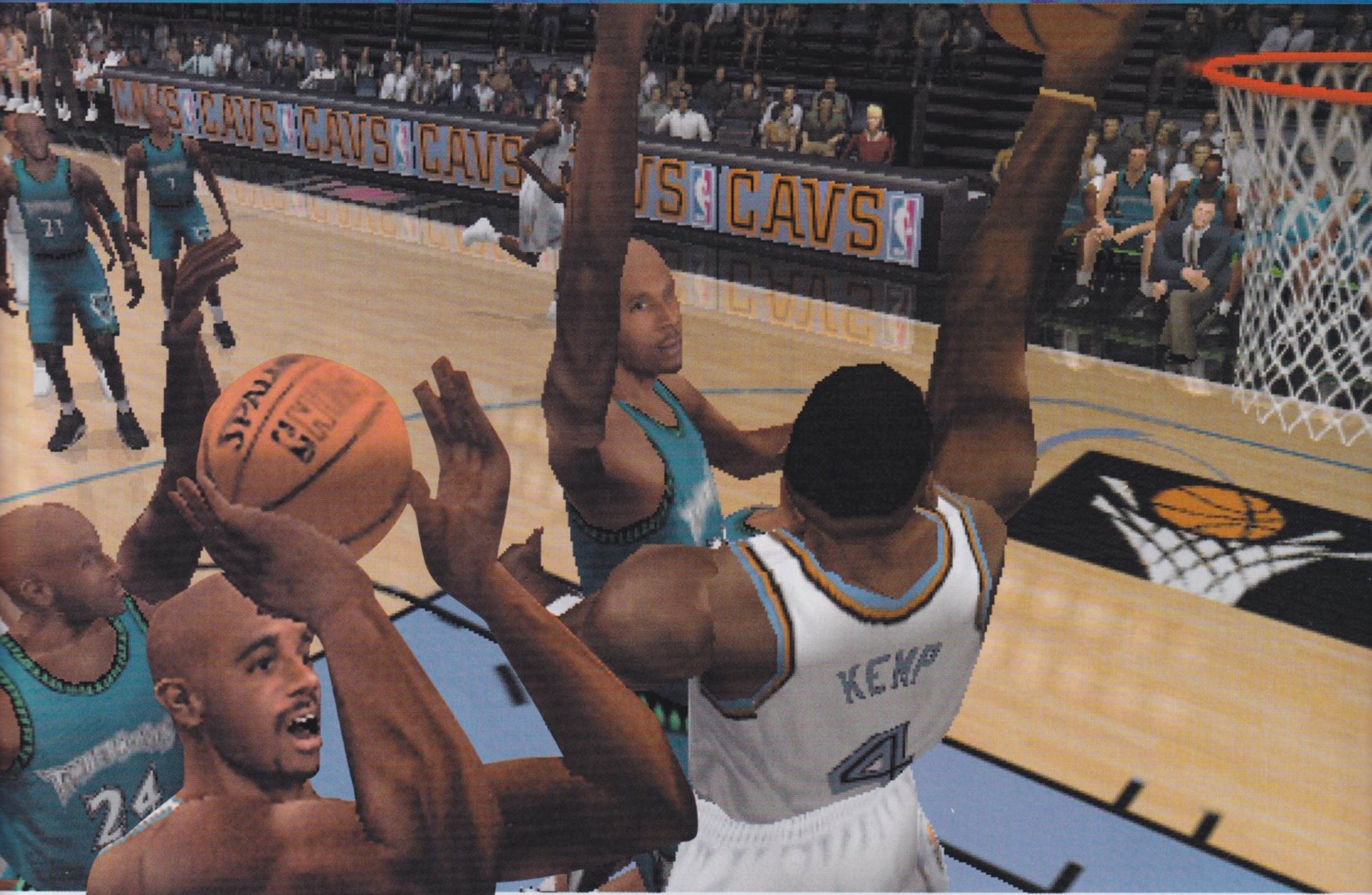


5 **CITY – Yes, it's a great big city. Have you got the idea yet?**


POINTS
OUT
GARRETT
22

NBA 2K

This is the game that basketball nuts have been waiting for, but will it hook the rest of us? **STUART DREDGE** steps on to the court to find out



△ *NBA 2K*'s replays are as good as anything you'll see on TV.

BASKETBALL ISN'T A SPORT that comes naturally to us Brits. While most American kids grow up with a hoop in the back yard, we're down the local park kicking a football around. It certainly explains why British NBA players are so rare, and also why the US soccer team got their arses kicked by lowly Iran in '98's World Cup.

Still, that hasn't stopped basketball steadily increasing in popularity in the UK, bolstered by improved TV coverage and more courts in schools. Okay, so for many people basketball is still a dry alternative to slogging around a muddy rugby pitch, but there's a healthy base of hardcore fans of the sport.

And it's these people that *NBA 2K* is set to appeal to. On the surface it's a sim aimed squarely at the real basketball buffs – the people who don't gawp in confusion at terms like 'posting up', 'cutters' and 'pick'n'rolls'. It's the most realistic basketball simulation ever. It's also nowhere near as dry and tedious as that might sound. What's more, you don't need a degree in basketball studies to enjoy it. It's one of those games that draws you in, keeps you hooked and leaves you feeling like you're an expert. Alongside its sister title, *NFL 2K*, the game is showing the way forward for all sports games – appealing to hardcore fans and casuals alike.

Best of all, *NBA 2K* is compelling proof that Dreamcast owners have no need to sit around moping until Electronic Arts finally decide to develop DC titles. *NBA 2K* makes its rivals on other platforms look, quite frankly, ropy, and is a model example of the sort of care and attention that fans of sports games crave. You might have already guessed that we think it's great.

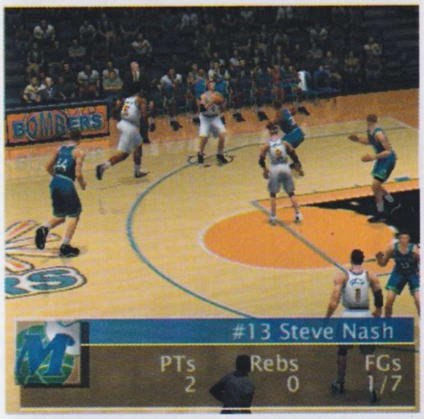
COURT IN THE ACT

It's hard to know where to start with *NBA 2K* because there's so much to it. It's a fully fledged simulation of the US pro league, complete with accurate squads for all the NBA franchises, as well as two all-star squads and some hidden teams. Visual Concepts have made a good job of ensuring that every player looks like their real-life counterpart. Admittedly only a few people in the UK will be able to judge whether the Milwaukee Bucks' reserve shooting guard looks 'right', but it's an example of the game's impressive attention to detail.

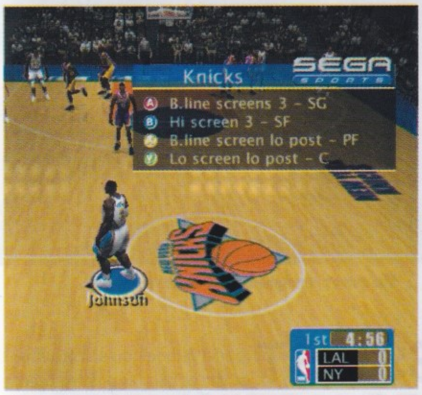
After loading up you could opt to jump right in using the quickstart mode, which chooses two random teams and enables you to go at it. However, if you're smart you'll take advantage of the practice mode in which you can pootle around an empty court and learn the ropes. The game even advises you on the timing of your shots.

Even before you step on to the court for real, you can tinker with a whole host of options to set up the game exactly how you want to play; the rules menu enables you to turn off any regulations that you don't fancy. Thus you could opt for no-holds-barred matches where the ref simply ignores all the fouls, or you could play strictly by the book, or anything in between.

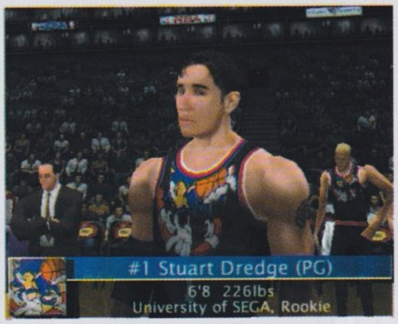
You can also choose from three skill levels: Rookie, Pro



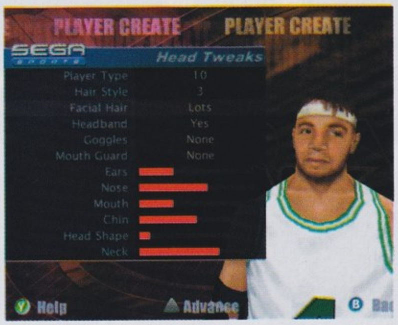
△ Stat updates flash up throughout the match.



△ Call plays to outwit your opponents.



△ Edit physical characteristics to create a player.



Player Type 10
Hair Style 3
Facial Hair Lots
Headband Yes
Goggles None
Mouth Guard None

△ Just like the real thing. Not.

BE YOUR OWN HERO

CREATE YOUR OWN PLAYERS AND SEND THEM OUT ON COURT DO DO BATTLE WITH STARS OF THE NBA

One of the best things about *NBA 2K* is the way you can create your own players and teams, then set up a custom season to pitch your players against the real-life NBA greats. We tested it out by creating an *ODM* team, the Bolsover Hedgehogs – complete with Sonic logo.

For each player, you enter a name and number before editing their physical characteristics. There are 12 basic 'types' to start with, which you then customise by changing the build and facial characteristics. It's not unlimited – only four hairstyles, for example – but with a bit of tinkering you can get a character who's recognisable as the real thing, or create a greasy little fat man with a porn star moustache. Then you get to enter their ratings, deciding on their strengths and weaknesses, to compose a balanced team. Finally you get to pit your motley crew against the best of the rest. Playing with a team composed of mates undoubtedly enhances the game no end, bumping up the thrill factor when you leather a top team.

In our season, the Hedgehogs proved to be a dazzlingly inconsistent team, capable of beating the best but also prone to cock-ups against the worst. Individually, Ed turned out to be an awesome long-range shooter, Dan developed a talent for jammy two-pointers under the basket, and despite all efforts yours truly tended to fluff easy shots and fall over. An accurate summary of real life, then.

and All Star. Refreshingly, Rookie is actually pretty tough, and you need a few hours of gameplay under your belt before you should even think about moving up to Pro. All Star mode is fearsome, ensuring that it takes a long time for anyone to get to the point when they think they've got the game licked.

Finally there's a handy option that enables you to enter secret codes to access the various hidden modes. Most are on the silly side – why does every basketball game have to include a Big Head mode? – but there are also a few secret developer teams to unlock.

RIM AND VIGOUR

Anyway, what about the game itself? Apart from the Quickstart mode there are three ways to play *NBA 2K*: Exhibition, Playoff and Season. Exhibition mode enables you to choose a couple of teams and get straight on court, and in Playoff you can take a team – or teams if there are a few of you – through the latter stages of the NBA Championship. However, the real meat of the game is found in Season mode, where you take a team through an entire season with either 14, 28, 56 or a whopping 82 games before you even reach the playoffs.

You can play with the default NBA squads or hold a fantasy draft to pick your own dream team. However, unless you've been following the league in real life the draft ends up as a lottery, where choosing your team is a matter of pot luck. Finally, you can create your own team and players (see the Be Your Own Hero panel above) and set up a custom league, pitting your motley bunch against the real-life teams.

Throughout the season, you can keep track of your players' stats and see how they compare to their equivalents in other teams. You can also trade players with other teams, something that you might need to do if one of your star men gets a long-term injury. *NBA 2K's* management aspects are finely balanced to add depth without taking attention away from the game itself.

And what a game. The match engine is the best we've seen in any basketball game, as you'd expect. The gameplay has been perfectly crafted in a way that we're used to seeing from the top Japanese developers, with immense attention to detail and spot-on playability. To say a sports game 'feels like playing the real thing' is probably one of the worst game journalism clichés, but *2K* is certainly closer to that holy grail than anything else we've come across. Sadly there's no *Showtime*-style 40-foot fiery dunks, but then that's realism for you.

The basic controls are simple to get to grips with: passing, shooting, blocking and stealing are all accomplished with the buttons; the right trigger is the turbo, while the left either guards the ball if you've got it or holds up your opponent if you haven't. There are also the skill moves: the B button switches your dribbling hand, or if used in conjunction with the turbo performs a slinky spin move. Tapping shoot fakes your opponent out, hopefully leaving you with a clear path to the basket. ▷

SPEAK OUT

YES, IT'S HIM AGAIN. **MATT O'DRISCOLL** IS THE EUROPEAN PRODUCER FOR *NBA 2K*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?

In a nutshell, the realism. There are more than 400 individually modelled players, with perfectly matched bone structures, head shapes, hairstyles and facial features.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAME ARE YOU PLAYING MOST AT THE MOMENT?

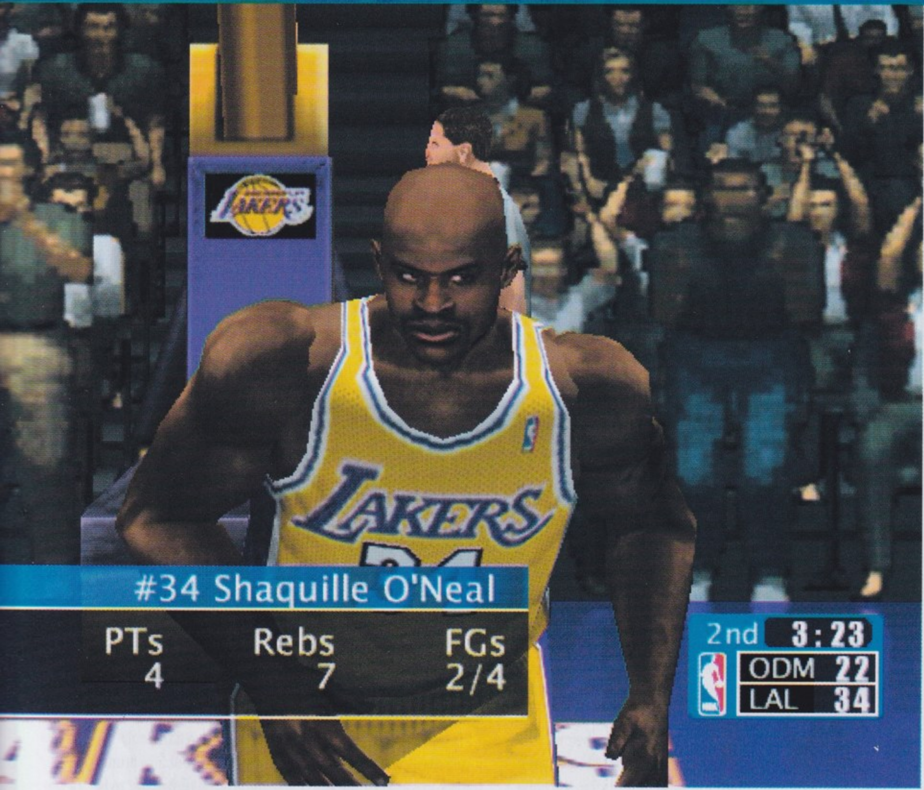
Still *Power Stone*. I love it. Hurry up *Power Stone 2*!

WHAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING CONVERSATION YOU'VE HAD WITH A CABBIE?

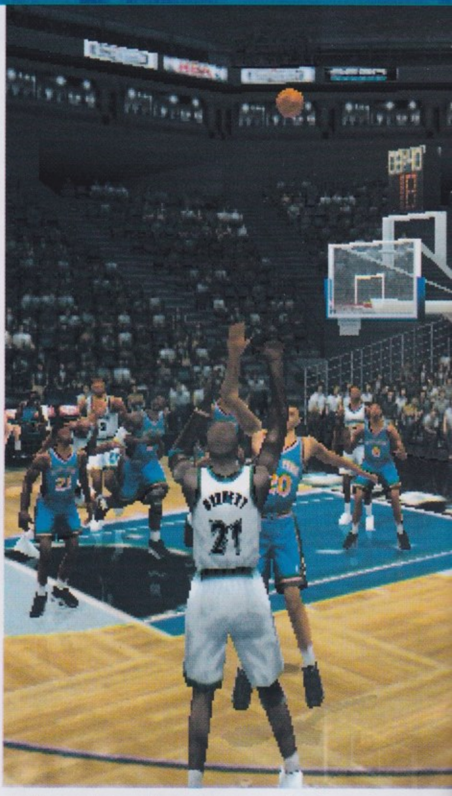
One was listening to some kind of weird chanting tape. When I asked him about it he went on about how it gave him power but also peace. He went on for ages. I paid and ran away.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE 2D GAME OF ALL TIME?

There are too many to name just one, so here's a few: *Revenge Of The Mutant Camels*, *The Eidolon*, *Kick Off 2*, *Way Of The Exploding Fist*, the *Spy Vs Spy* games, *Xenon 2*, *Speedball 2* and many more.



△ **Great baller, crap rapper.**



△ **The game's atmosphere really draws you in.**

▷ While the controls are simple to master, the results are impressively slick. The game chooses which kind of pass to perform according to the situation, so your players effortlessly throw snap, overhead and behind-the-back passes around the court. When you look back at a move using the replay option, you'll be surprised at how professional the whole thing looks.

HOOP, THERE IT IS

Once you're used to the controls, there's the advanced strategy of play-calling to grapple with. Player movement is handled with the analog stick, so a click on the D-pad brings up an on-screen menu from which you can select from four pre-defined 'plays' where your team runs around the court in specific patterns. To be honest, it's confusing if you're not a basketball expert, and we suspect that most Brits, like us, will take advantage of the option of leaving that sort of thing to the console.

The AI in *NBA 2K* is what really sets it above any other basketball game we've seen. The console is an extremely tough opponent which, even in Rookie mode, keeps you well and truly on your toes. The result is games which ebb and flow like the real thing, and also the fact that if you stick rigidly to one game plan you'll be on the receiving end of some thunderous whuppings. To succeed in this game you need to operate a fluid strategy capable of adapting to the opposition and game situation as required.

Another area where *NBA 2K* scores highly is in the commentary, traditionally one of the more irritating aspects of sports games. Okay, so *2K*'s commentators, being American, tend to spout utter cobblers throughout the game, but at least they do it realistically.

"ONE OF THE CLASSIEST DREAMCAST GAMES YET"

Although there is the odd glitch and some repetition, in general it adds to the atmosphere. They even make proper jokes and then fall about laughing.

The presentation as a whole is pretty impressive. Throughout every match, snatches of statistics flash up on-screen, highlighting the performance of your players and spotting any trends within the game. For example, if you're under heavy pressure, you might get a flash pointing out that the opposition "are on a 12-2 streak in the last two minutes". Again, it adds to the atmosphere.

And it's the atmosphere that makes *NBA 2K* one of the classiest Dreamcast games yet. The crowd, the lights, the sounds… it all adds up to draw you in and keep you absorbed. It's impossible not to get caught up in the mood. When you pull off a crucial two-pointer to tie the game, you find yourself whooping uncontrollably, punching the air and dancing around maniacally with no thoughts of personal dignity. In short, *NBA 2K* turns you into an American. Frightening, huh? *[Terrifying! - Ed.]*

BASKET CASES

We've rhapsodised so far, but there are two main problems with *NBA 2K*. The first is relatively minor and relates to the controller. It's awkward for calling plays or running alley-oops, as you need to switch your left hand between the analog stick and the D-pad. There are alternative control configurations available, but they're all a bit fiddly. Still, if you're allowing the console to call your plays it barely affects the gameplay.

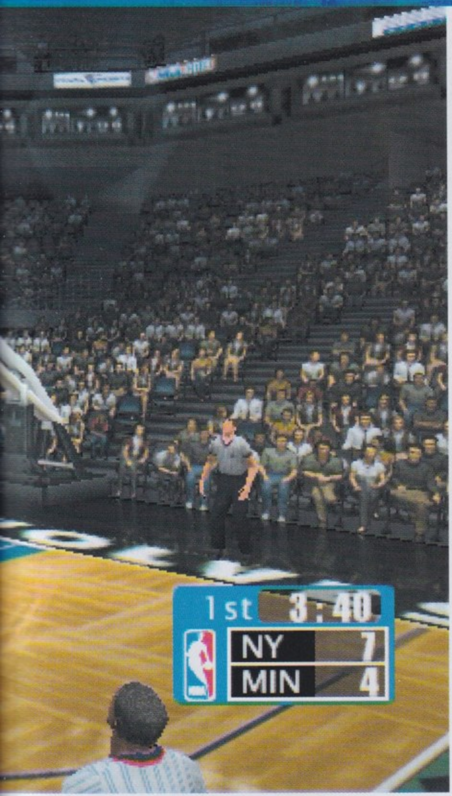
The second issue is more serious. If you want to play season mode, the saved data fills up an entire VM unit. Effectively, you must either lose your save files for your other games, or spend £20 on an extra VM. Okay, so it shows how much depth there is to the season mode, but it's a real pain if you're strapped for cash.

So, to the rating. Deciding on a score for *NBA 2K* has been quite difficult. Yes, it's a fantastic game, but it's still likely to appeal to a limited audience here in the UK. If you're a basketball fan, there's no doubt that it's an essential purchase, and once bought may well ruin your social life for the next year. For you people, it's probably worth a perfect 10.

Conversely, if you've got little interest in basketball, then *2K* probably won't be your cup of tea, no matter how good a game it is. It's doubtful whether anyone from this category has got this far in the review (they'll be perusing *Red Dog* screenshots on page 74 by now), but for what it's worth they'd probably see it as a five.

For everyone in between those two poles, whether you're a casual basketball fan or simply a sports game enthusiast, *NBA 2K* isn't far from being an essential purchase – as long as you don't mind splashing out on an extra VM unit.

In terms of quality, the game is the standard to which all developers should aspire. In that sense, it's an important milestone in the development of Dreamcast's



software line-up. Football fans over here are crying out for something as good as this, so the release of *NBA 2K* should ensure that we don't accept any more half-arsed soccer titles. If American sports can be this good on Dreamcast, then there's no reason why it can't be done for others. The campaign for a Visual Concepts footie game starts here.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **VISUAL CONCEPTS**

VERDICT

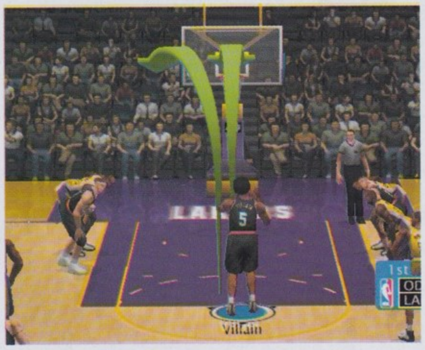
ALL SPORTS GAMES SHOULD ASPIRE TO BE THIS GOOD

UPPERS
Ultra-realistic • Slick gameplay • Great player creation system • Incredibly atmospheric

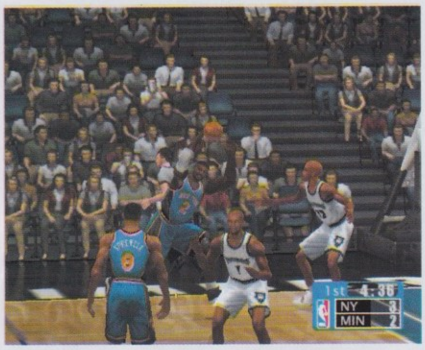
DOWNERS
Fills up your VM • Play-calling is fiddly

IN ONE HOUR We'd beaten the Bulls 115-98.
WEBSITE www.sega.com/games/games_nba.shtml
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 60Hz option, VGA-compatible

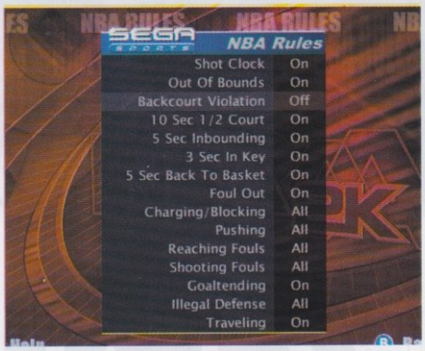
ODM RATING OUT OF 10
8



△ **The free throws are easy to master.**



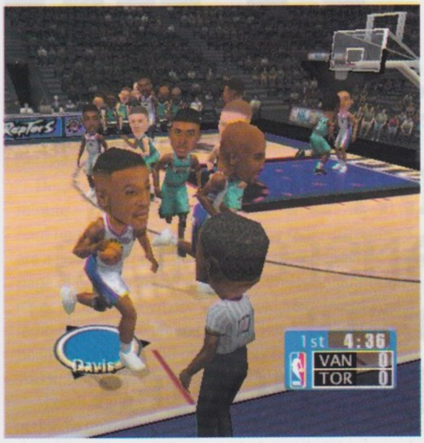
△ **Your every move is watched by an attentive crowd.**



SEGA SPORTS NBA Rules

Shot Clock	On
Out Of Bounds	On
Backcourt Violation	Off
10 Sec 1/2 Court	On
5 Sec Inbounding	On
3 Sec In Key	On
5 Sec Back To Basket	On
Foul Out	On
Charging/Blocking	All
Pushing	All
Reaching Fouls	All
Shooting Fouls	All
Goaltending	On
Illegal Defense	All
Traveling	On

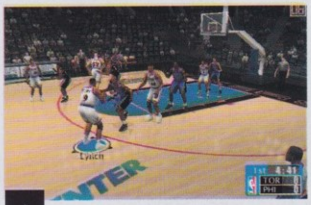
△ **Turn off the rules you dislike.**



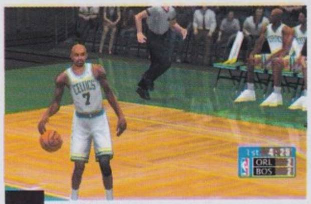
△ **The obligatory Big Head mode.**

WALKTHROUGH
VIEW FROM THE HOOP

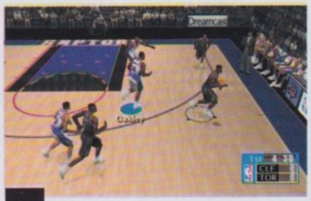
There are eight ways to watch the action in *NBA 2K*, although you soon discover which one's your favourite and stick to it. Here are five of 'em



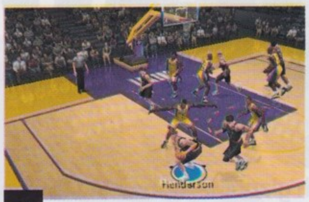
1 **Full Court Medium. The default view, and our preferred one. The team with the ball always plays up.**



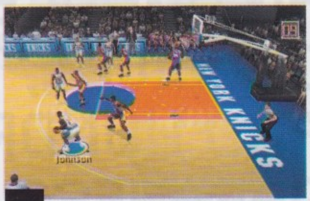
2 **Side High. Slightly more fiddly to play with, as you can't always see where you're heading.**



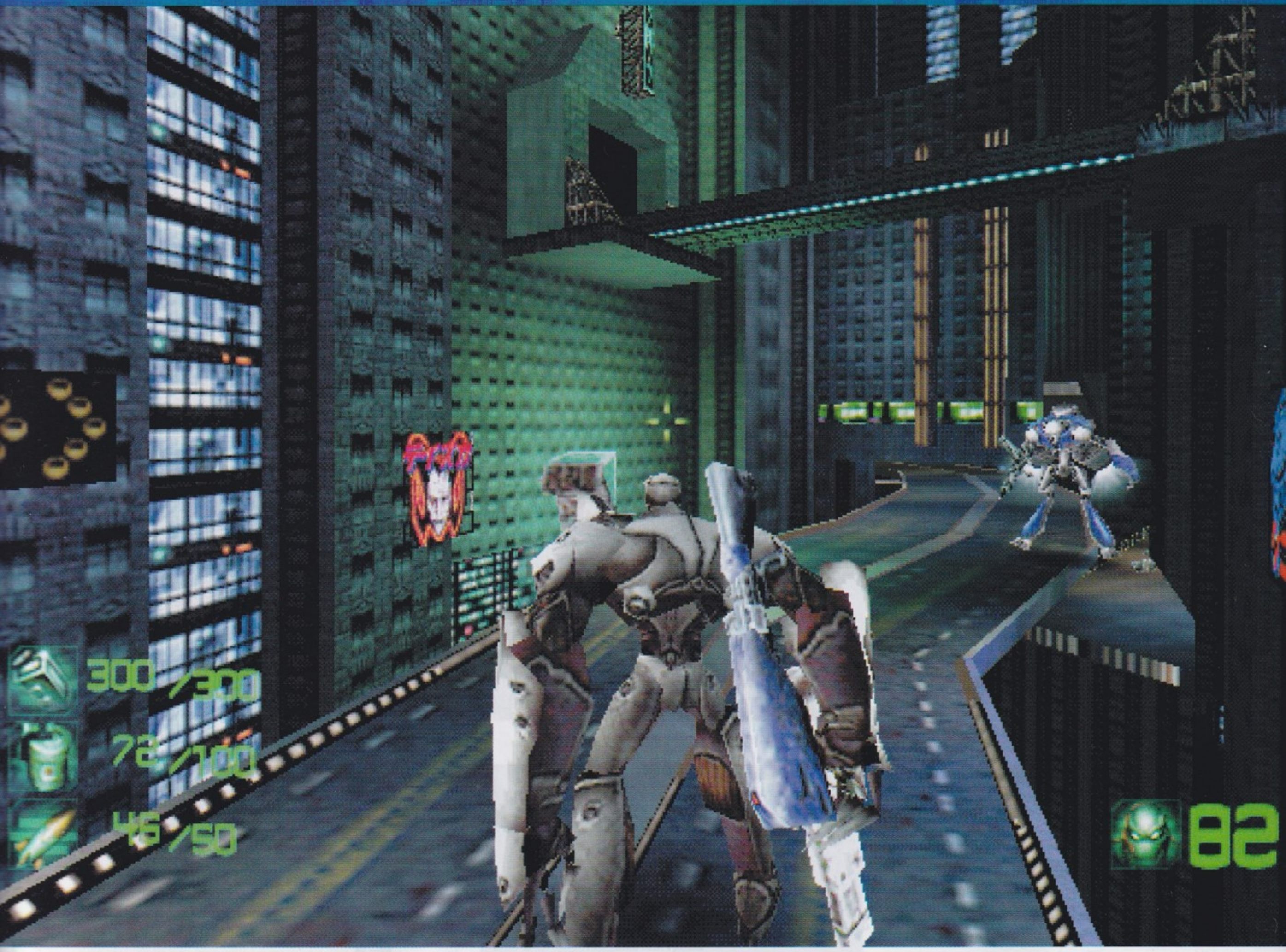
3 **Isometric Medium. Familiar from basketball games on other consoles. A happy medium between Full and Side.**



4 **Action. Follows the ball from a behind-the-man perspective. Looks lovely, but not the easiest to play with.**



5 **Cinematic. Make like the pros with a TV-style view. Again, shows off the visuals but hard to actually use.**



△ The *Blade Runner*-esque city is the setting for your battles.

SLAVE ZERO

With giant Mechs beating the crap out of each other, there's bound to be a bit of damage done. **STUART DREDGE** gets out the soldering iron

"AN UNHOLY MIXTURE OF GODZILLA, TRANSFORMERS AND HUNDREDS OF JAPANESE ANIMÉ MOVIES"

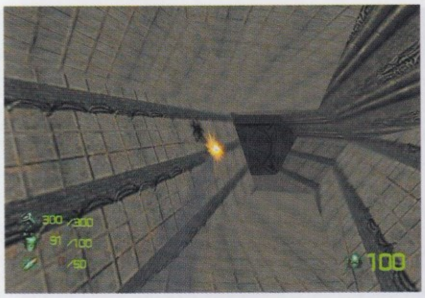
ON THE CD

IF EVER THERE WAS A GAME CONCEPT with 'sure-fire winner' written all over it, it's *Slave Zero*. After all, it's about a bunch of enormous robots running around a city beating each other up with a variety of explosive weapons. It's an unholy mixture of Godzilla, Transformers and hundreds of Japanese animé films you probably haven't heard of. Basically, it's dripping with high-tech testosterone. And it should have your mouth watering.

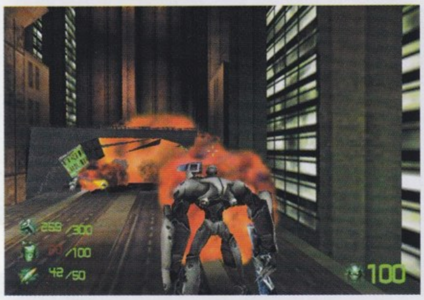
You could argue that any game sounding this good is bound to be a disappointment. *Slave Zero* has a lot to live up to, after all. Besides the giant robot aspect, it's also got the distinction of being the first Dreamcast first-person shooter to be released in the UK.

First-person? Are we sure? Well, you can change the view to play from your bot's perspective, and there's a deathmatch mode (more of which later), so we think it counts, even if it's not entirely like *Quake* or *Half-Life*. Anyway, with the merest mention of first-person shooters getting half our readership drooling, *Slave Zero* is bound to get plenty of attention. Like we said, it's got a lot to live up to. And does it? Er… maybe, but maybe not. Bear with us, okay?

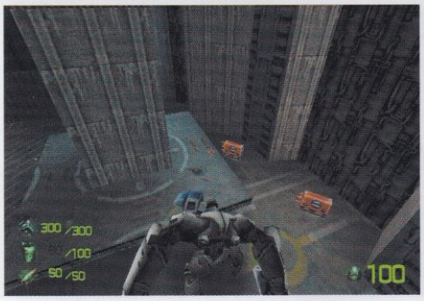
Usually with action games, the developers cobble together a sketchy plot to justify their game's carnage



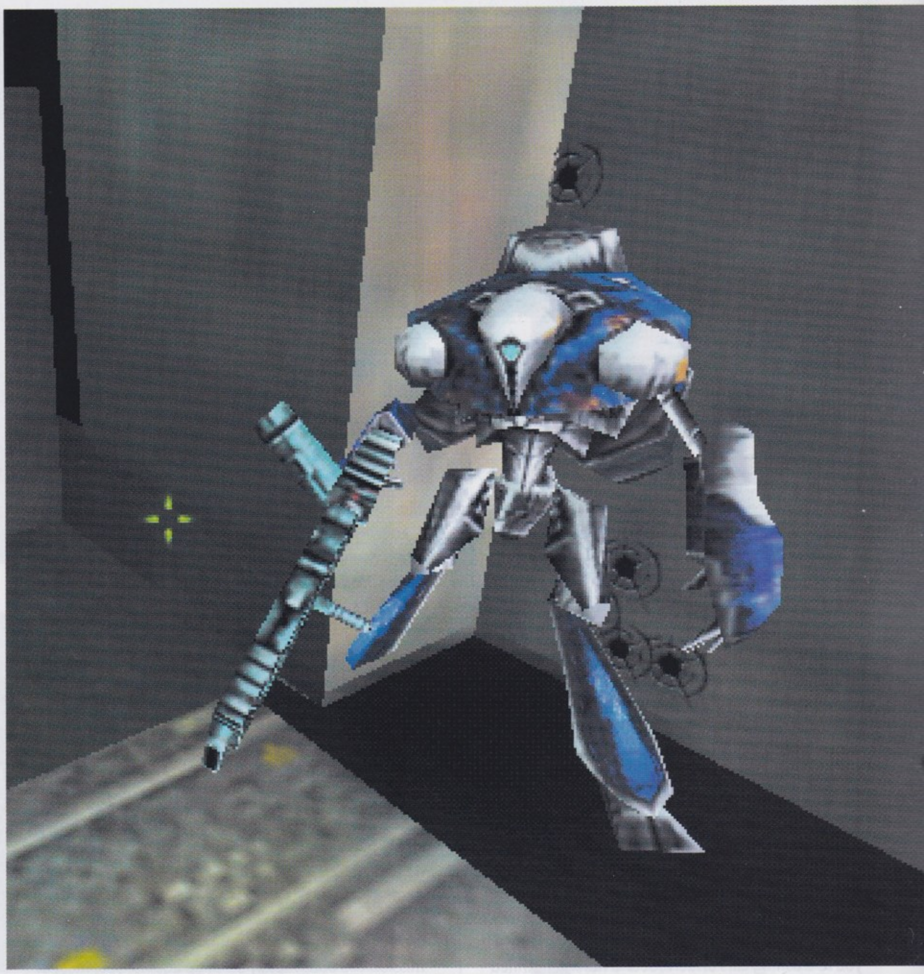
△ **Sneak through the narrow tunnels.**



△ **You can destroy bridges.**



△ **These pick-ups are useful.**



△ **Corner your foe and eliminate them.**

and concentrate on the game itself. And they're probably right – does anyone remember the plot of *Quake*, for example? Still, displaying commendable attention to detail, *Slave Zero*'s developers didn't just write a plot, they wrote a whole bloody novella!

The game is set 500 years in the future in Megacity S1-9, a futuristic city built atop the ruins of Beijing. It's ruled by an evil dictator who's using a mysterious energy source to control the population. The city is built on multiple 'decks': the lower ones are where most of the population lives in squalor; then there's the military sector, where the dictator's army lives; there's also a sewer network and a lab sector. You get to see 'em all in the process of playing the game.

Where do you fit into all of this? You're part of the rebellion force, fighting to unseat the dreaded dictator and restore peace to the land. You've stolen a 60-foot biomechanical robot, Slave Zero, which you're now going to use to romp through the city laying waste to the forces of the SovKhan, many of whom, incidentally, are also 60-foot robots and some are even bigger.

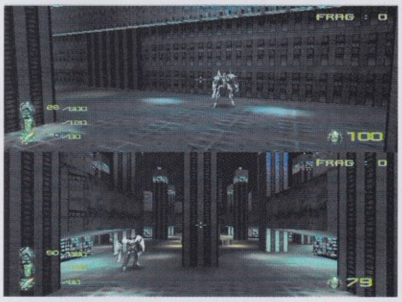
The gameplay itself is mission-based – 15 in all, set in various parts of the megacity. Rather than give you mission briefing screens setting out your targets, you're instead guided by radio messages from your mysterious controller. They tell you what to do, where to go, and warn you of upcoming bosses. It's all very atmospheric.

Now, if you were a PC owner, this sort of game would have you using a combination of mouse and keyboard to control it. Obviously that's not possible with Dreamcast – not yet, at least – but the developers have exercised some thought in devising an alternative. You move your robot by using the A, B, X and Y buttons, the triggers fire your gun and missiles, the analog pad aims your weapons, and the D-pad helps you to jump, stomp and pick things up. It's fiddly to start with, but you soon get used to it.

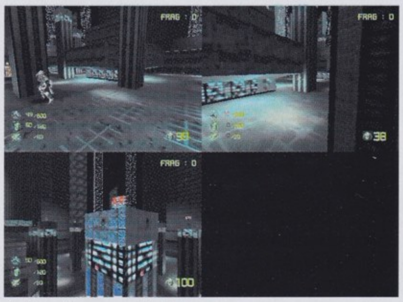
Despite the game's flaws – which we'll get to in a minute – it's noticeable that Infogrammes have worked hard on the overall presentation. The radio instructions are a novel touch, doing away with the need for a boring page of briefing at the start of each mission. Although it's generally clear where you should be going next, the radio crackles into life to help out whenever you might be in any doubt – and occasionally it even squawks at you to stop heading in the wrong direction!

There's also the odd cut-scene interspersed into the action to help things along. Often it ties in with the radio messages. For example, towards the end of the second mission, your controller warns you that there's "a ▷

△ **Heavy metal can do you a lot of damage.**



△ One-on-one split-screen action.



△ Four players can duke it out at once.

FOUR'S A CROWD

Judging by your letters and emails, a lot of you are breathlessly awaiting the release of a Web-enabled first-person shooter – *Quake III*, *Half-Life* or whatever. Sadly, online Dreamcast gaming hasn't kicked off yet in the UK, but to tide us over *Slave Zero* has a split-screen deathmatch mode for up to four players.

Infogrammes have created eight original levels for the multiplayer mode, ranging from the crammed-in Box Of Fun level to the claustrophobic tunnels map. Each player gets their own character model, and you can decide whether you want to play using a time limit, frag limit or combination of the two. Nice configuration, but how does it play?

Actually, it's good. We had visions of unplayable split-screen jerk-o-vision, but it seems to run smoothly even with four players. Most of the levels feel a little on the small side, but then that makes for more killing, as you can't run away and hide from your opponents like a wuss.

Like the game as a whole, *Slave Zero*'s deathmatch mode is more fun than you'd expect. And when online gaming does get off the ground here, we'd certainly be interested in seeing an update to take advantage of it.

▷ massive hostile heading your way". A few streets later, you jump down into an exposed area, and a cut-scene pops up showing the boss landing in front of you. Then you fight it. It's all very atmospheric.

The scale of the game has been well-judged too. You really do feel like you're a giant robot, particularly when you're crushing cars underfoot and hurling petrified humans against the walls. It's not essential to the gameplay at all, but it is good fun.

In terms of its looks, *Slave Zero* is average. It doesn't look like a next-gen Dreamcast title, with textures that wouldn't look out of place on an average N64 game. You could say the graphics are purely functional, but then Dreamcast owners expect more. Its nearest DC comparison is probably *Fighting Force 2* – and that's hardly a recommendation.

Even so, the graphics do set the mood for the game as a whole. *Slave Zero* wears its influences squarely on its sleeve: Megacity S1-9 looks pretty much like what you'd get if you crossed *Blade Runner* with *Judge Dredd* and threw in a dash of Japanese animé for good measure; the streets are mean; the sewers are murky; and the overall feel is one of brooding.

Right, now let's get to the problems. *Slave Zero* feels rushed in places – there are some really annoying bugs that get in the way of enjoying the gameplay. One of them is the slowdown that occasionally rears its ugly head: you'll be stomping along, and suddenly the whole thing slows to a near-crawl. There were complaints about this when the game was released in the US last year, and it seems the problem hasn't been fixed.

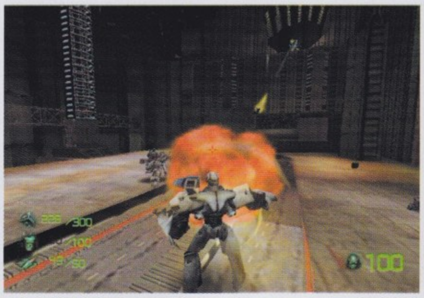
There are also little things: when you're playing using the behind-the-robot perspective, getting stuck in a tight corner seems to switch you into first-person view for no apparent reason. Yeah, so it's a little thing that shouldn't irritate you, but it does. Well it does us, anyway. It's annoying little bugs like this that snap you out of the game's atmosphere.

The other main problem with *Slave Zero* is its difficulty level. Even on easy setting, once you've got past the first mission the odds rapidly stack up against you. Most of the enemies are mere cannon fodder, but when there are three of them sending a barrage of fire your way it feels downright impossible. For casual gamer, the frustration factor is immense, and things aren't helped by the fact that when you die, you restart at the beginning of the mission.

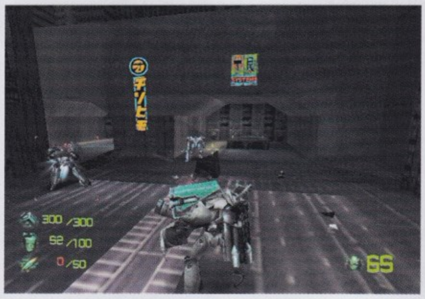
You can see that the idea was to create a challenging game where you can't just plant your feet and let 'em have it. Instead you must combine jumping around evading enemy fire with blasting off a few volleys of your own. The trouble is that it's too difficult, especially when you've got to use the Dreamcast controller. Okay, so it's not Infogrammes' fault, but PC players especially are going to spend their time playing game yearning for a mouse and keyboard control system.

On the plus side, *Slave Zero* is undeniably likeable once you've learnt the ropes. The audio guidance system adds to the atmosphere – for example, on the mission where you're racing back to defend your base from an enemy attack, the radio messages get gradually more panicky.

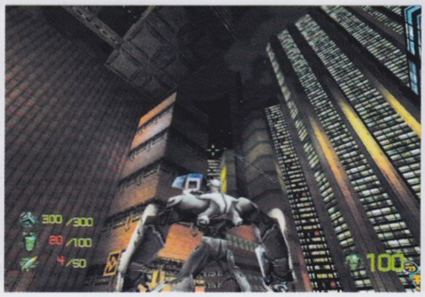
There are a lot of nice touches to admire in the game, whether it's the enemy minions gracefully sidestepping your shots, or the way you can pick up cars and humans and throw them at the walls – great if you've got a subconscious King Kong complex. It's a real paradox: on the one hand it feels like a game that's had a lot of



△ Watch out for the snipers.



△ Take on multiplayer enemies.



△ Skyscrapers loom atmospherically.

SPEAK OUT

WE TALKED TO *SLAVE ZERO* PRODUCER **STUART LEDGER** ABOUT THE GAME

HOW MUCH WERE YOU INFLUENCED BY ANIMÉ?

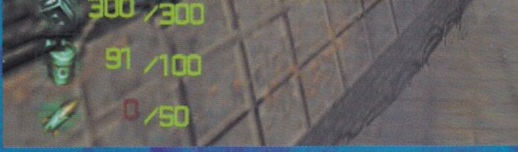
We're not actually an animé-styled game, although it was one of our reference points for the speed and agility of the robots, as well as for characterisation. I think of our style as more influenced by European graphic novels than by animé – dark, dirty and textured.

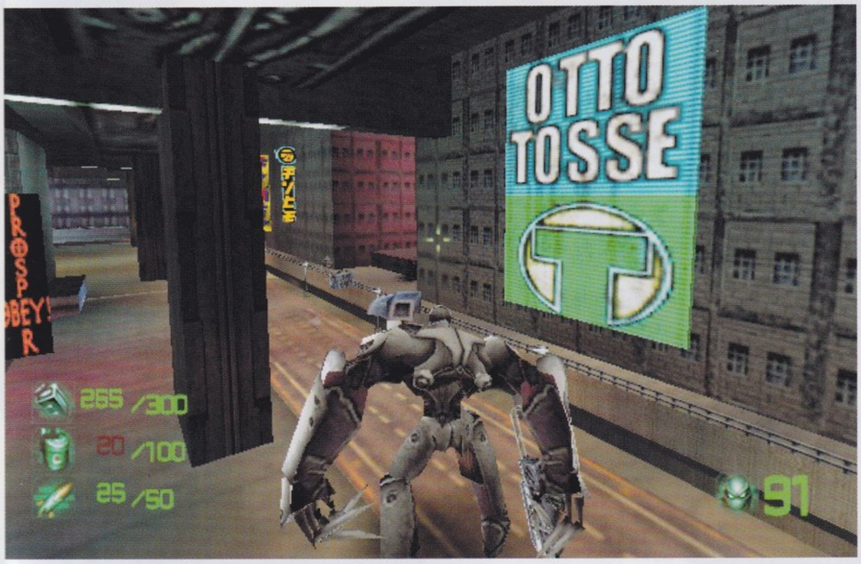
DID YOU WANT TO ADD AN ONLINE OPTION?

When we started *Slave Zero* we were very excited about the possibility of online play, but unfortunately we couldn't get the software development kit in time. We had to cut our online game scheme to ship the game in time for Christmas.

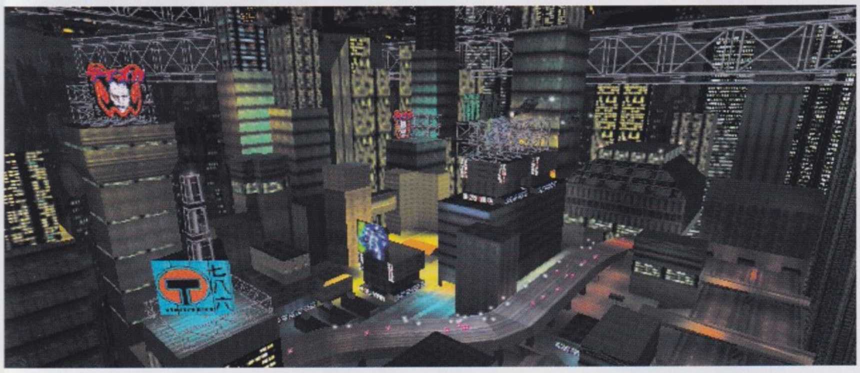
WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

We've been playing *Jet Force Gemini* a lot, as well as *NFL 2K*.





△ **Dirty old Otto, eh?**



△ **The city panorama, as seen in the intro sequence.**

thought put into it, but on the other there are problems that make it look like a rush job. Overall, it's an uneasy combination of the two.

If truth be told, our initial impressions of *Slave Zero* aren't that good. It isn't visually stunning, the controls are fiddly, and it was too bloody difficult. Still, the more we played it, the more we liked it – it's definitely a slow burner. The mission system prevents it from getting samey, while the game's brooding atmosphere gradually reels you in. By the time we reached the fifth mission or so, we were genuinely enjoying ourselves. It just goes to show that first impressions aren't always accurate.

That said, there's no getting away from the fact that the game has some fairly major flaws. The difficulty level in particular may put a lot of people off, while the occasional slowdowns are maddening.

As an example of what Dreamcast is capable of, *Slave Zero* isn't one of the premier titles. Still, there are some nice touches in there, and there's plenty of gameplay to be had if you persevere. Try it. You might just like it.

PRICE:**£39.99**
PUBLISHER:**INFOGRAMMES**
DEVELOPER:**INFOGRAMMES**

VERDICT

INNOVATIVE GAME SPOILED BY FLAWS

UPPERS
Ultra-realistic • Slick gameplay • Great player creation system • Incredibly atmospheric

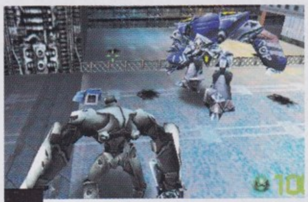
DOWNERS
Fills up your VM • Play calling is fiddly

IN ONE HOUR We'd got to the second mission
WEBSITE www.slavezero.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Bordered PAL

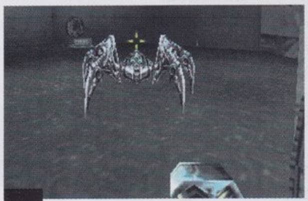
ODM RATING OUT OF 10
6

WALKTHROUGH
BOT TO TROT

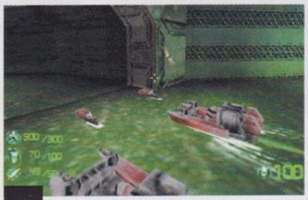
Slave Zero's gameplay is varied – sometimes you'll be battling anonymous minions, and at other times you'll face the big guys



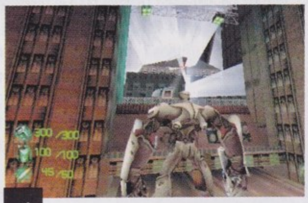
1 **You'll find this sub-boss not too far into the game. He looks scary, but can be dispatched easily if you keep moving.**



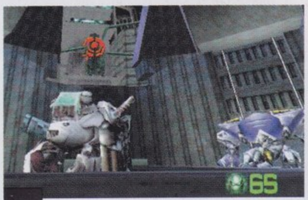
2 **These spiders feature later on in the game, and are exceptionally creepy. Shoot them before they skitter away.**



3 **One mission sees you leading this convoy to safety. But they have a tendency to blunder into enemy attacks.**

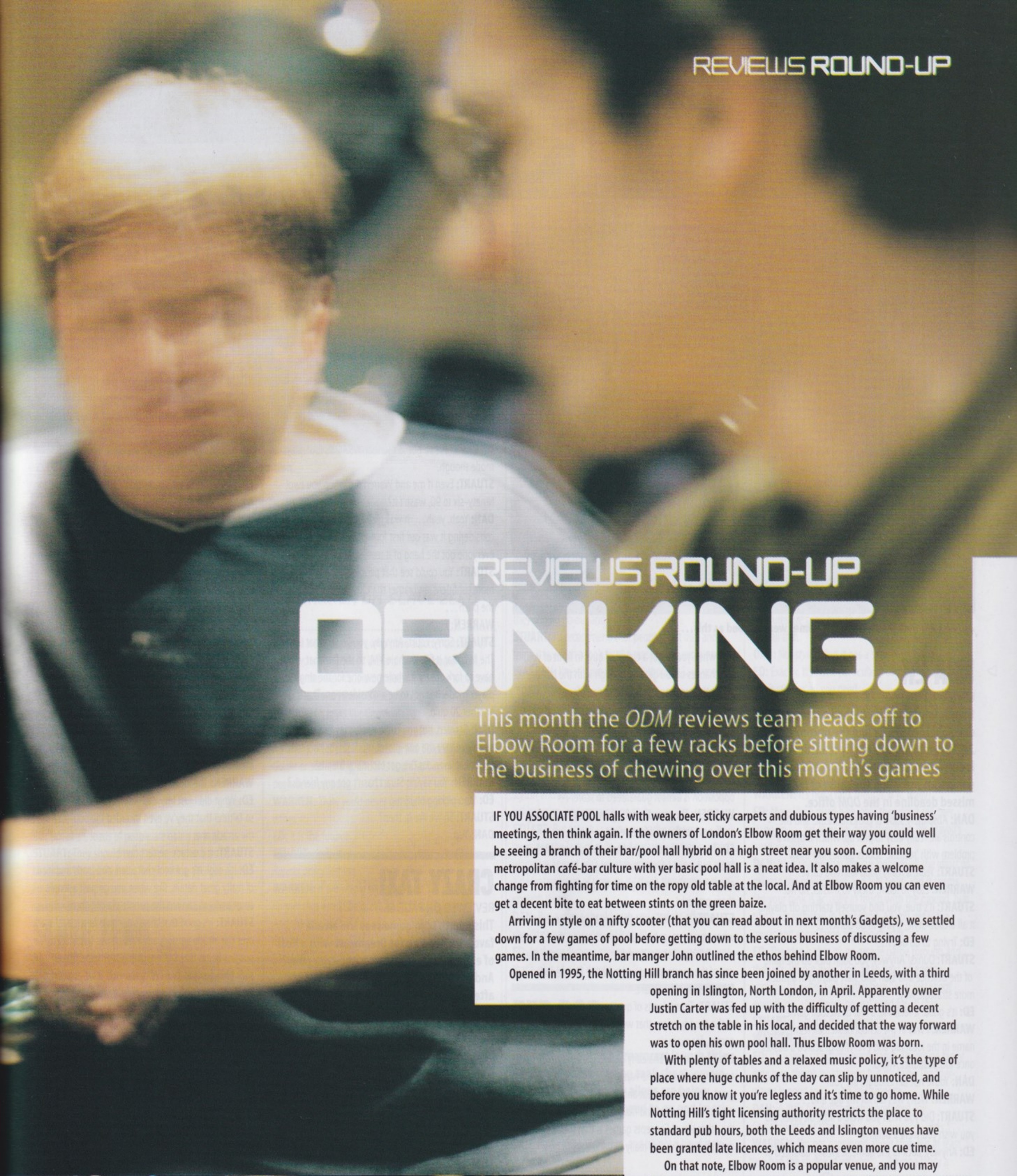


4 **The first mission sees you destroying three SovKhan generators, which explode in an aesthetically pleasing manner.**



5 **The train array level sees you dancing around a revolving floor avoiding pot shots and shooting this target.**

PHOTOGRAPHY: TANYA CHALKIN



REVIEWS ROUND-UP

DRINKING...

This month the *ODM* reviews team heads off to Elbow Room for a few racks before sitting down to the business of chewing over this month's games

IF YOU ASSOCIATE POOL halls with weak beer, sticky carpets and dubious types having 'business' meetings, then think again. If the owners of London's Elbow Room get their way you could well be seeing a branch of their bar/pool hall hybrid on a high street near you soon. Combining metropolitan café-bar culture with yer basic pool hall is a neat idea. It also makes a welcome change from fighting for time on the ropy old table at the local. And at Elbow Room you can even get a decent bite to eat between stints on the green baize.

Arriving in style on a nifty scooter (that you can read about in next month's Gadgets), we settled down for a few games of pool before getting down to the serious business of discussing a few games. In the meantime, bar manger John outlined the ethos behind Elbow Room.

Opened in 1995, the Notting Hill branch has since been joined by another in Leeds, with a third opening in Islington, North London, in April. Apparently owner Justin Carter was fed up with the difficulty of getting a decent stretch on the table in his local, and decided that the way forward was to open his own pool hall. Thus Elbow Room was born.

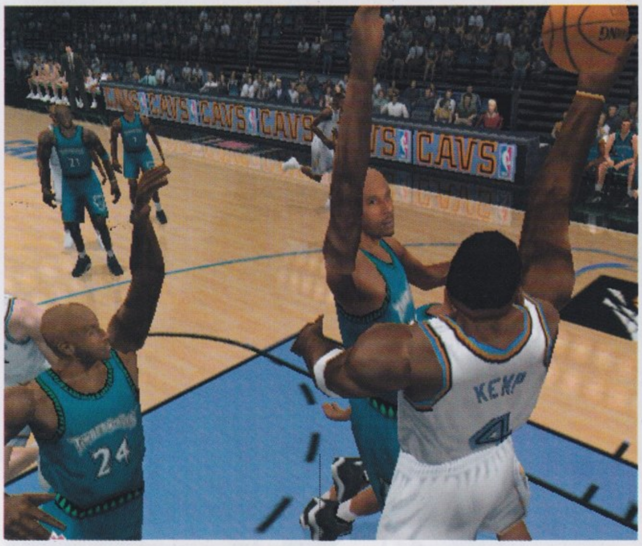
With plenty of tables and a relaxed music policy, it's the type of place where huge chunks of the day can slip by unnoticed, and before you know it you're legless and it's time to go home. While Notting Hill's tight licensing authority restricts the place to standard pub hours, both the Leeds and Islington venues have been granted late licences, which means even more cue time.

On that note, Elbow Room is a popular venue, and you may have to queue for up to three hours to get on the tables at busy times. Still, if you have no burning desire to be like Paul Newman in *The Hustler*, then you can always hit the bar to kill time.

▷

- *You can find Elbow Room at 103 Westbourne Grove, London W2 (020 7221 5211), and 64 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 (0113 245 7011). The London bar is open normal pub hours; Leeds bar midday-2.30am Mon-Sat, midday-10pm Sundays.*

...& THINKING



△ *NBA 2K*: **Now if only all sports games were as good as this...**

▷ NBA 2K

REVIEWED ON PAGE 78

Hugely impressive basketball game from the developers of *NFL 2K* and the upcoming *NHL 2K*. Fast-moving and highly realistic, *NBA 2K* is one of the best true four-player sports games around – and the cause of many a missed deadline in the *ODM* office.

DAN: Absolutely superb. Looks fantastic, and the controls are really easy to pick up, which is often a problem with 'realistic' sports games like this.

STUART: Yeah, a really good learning curve.

WARREN: Easy to learn, tricky to master, ho ho.

STUART: It's true, you find yourself starting off playing it all arcade-style, trying to do dunks...

ED: Trying to do dogs?!

STUART: Dunks! Anyway, you soon pick up the hang of the defence and stuff and start playing in a much more strategic way.

ED: It's good. It feels like a real basketball game.

WARREN: I was in the school basketball team. Got my name in the local rag and everything. Scored a basket once too. Just once, mind.

DAN: You're not tall enough, are you?

WARREN: Well I was tall for my age and...

STUART: Did you wish you were a little bit taller, did you wish you were a baller?!

ED: Anyway, back to the game. It's really balanced in that when you've got a crowd of guys in front of you, the chances of you getting through with the ball are about the same as it would be in real life

ED: As the games get tight you really have to think about your tactics: like, do you go for the long shot and try for three points even if you risk a turnover, or do you go for the safer two-point dunk? It gets to the point where you really have to avoid turnovers, as the opposition is almost guaranteed to score.

WARREN: The crowd's really good. They're all doing stuff, not just flat and featureless.

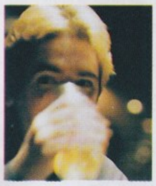
ED: The subs' bench is good too. You can see all their faces and reactions to what's going on, plus they've all got special wooden legs cos they didn't render them properly!

STUART: Yeah, it's great the way they all jump up when you score, or hold their heads when there's a near miss. Talking of sports games, this is loads better than any of the sports games we've had in Europe so far.

DAN: Tell us why, Stuart.

STUART: There's loads of quality and detail to it; none of the shoddy edges that we've seen in the footie games, for example.

ED: Yeah, I mean EA's early games like *FIFA* were amazing, and everyone would go: 'Wow, it looks so great, it sounds so great and there's so much to it,' but it wasn't really easy and fluid to play. The thing with the other Visual Concepts games is that they have the detail but they're also really fun and easy to play.



"LOADS BETTER THAN ANY OF THE SPORTS GAMES WE'VE HAD IN EUROPE"
– STUART ON *NBA 2K*

STUART: I'd love to see a football game done with this much detail. That would be fantastic.

ED: They're doing an NHL – hockey – too, and I can't wait to see that.

WARREN: We've got to mention *NBA 2K*'s four-player mode though.

STUART: Even if me and Warren did whup you two! Ninety-six to 90, wasn't it?

DAN: Yeah, yeah... It was really impressive considering it was our first four-player game on it and everyone got the hang of it really quickly.

STUART: You could see that people were getting more confident, and rather than just running down the pitch...

WARREN: Pitch?!

STUART: Sorry, court. Anyway, you know what I mean. The fact that it fills a whole VM, so the fact that you have to fork out for a whole new one for the single-player mode, has got to be a consideration. That's another 20 quid.

DAN: Granted, but you could easily play this loads and never even try the one-player mode. I wouldn't touch the one-player, cos I've got too many friends!

WARREN: You saying Stuart hasn't got any friends?

ED: Stop picking on him.

STUART: So we like it, then?

DAN: Yup.

"A SUPERB-LOOKING GAME, THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT"
– DAN ON *CRAZY TAXI*

CRAZY TAXI

REVIEWED ON PAGE 66

This month's big game sees the arcade favourite heading for Dreamcast with a host of extra features. But is it a one-trick pony? And can the game maintain your interest after the honeymoon is over?

STUART: I think it's like a straight conversion, but it's got the extra bits on it too, and that's a good thing.

WARREN: I think there will be people who don't like this game though, because you need to master some pretty fundamental things, otherwise you won't progress anywhere.

ED: I think that'll be a surprising number of people, too. A lot of people will love it for half an hour and then think: "And?" Because it is such a straight arcade version it keeps that whole idea. There'll be a real split, because if you can be bothered to learn things like the crazy dash and crazy through you'll do alright, but without that you won't pick up any more than eight or nine people. Unless you learn how it works you'll just be reaching that point and not getting any further.

DAN: It is a superb looking game though, there's no doubt about that.

WARREN: Yeah, it's just like having an arcade in your home.

ED: You realise you're going to get quoted saying all these stupid things every month?

STUART: It's just the sort of game you'd want to show off to your mates.

WARREN: The ideal post-pub experience.

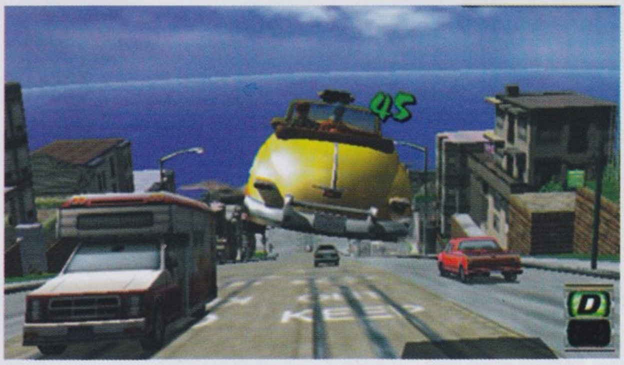
ED: What did I just tell you? Anyway, the transfer is so faithful that they've even included the pop-up from the arcade one.

STUART: It is arcade perfect then!

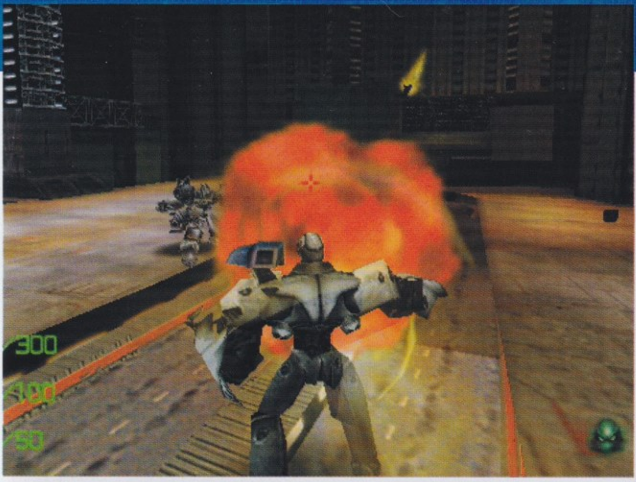
ED: It's cool. It's got cool characters and loads and loads of really great details, like when you go past a tennis court and you can see the people playing there.

STUART: It's good that there's a whole new city there over the arcade version, and that shows that they're not just being lazy, but are giving the home player something extra.

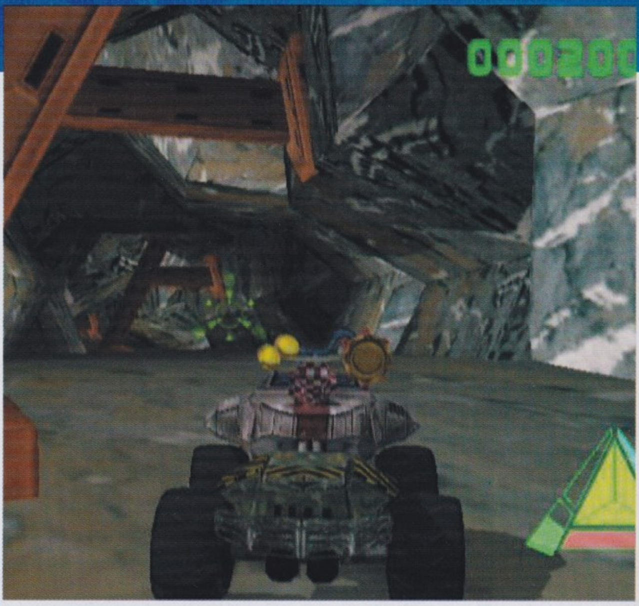
DAN: All very well, but I've still got worries about how



△ *Crazy Taxi*: **brings the arcade into your front room.**



△ ***Slave Zero*: nice concept, shame about the execution.**



△ ***Red Dog*: tanks for the music, anyway.**

"THERE'S JUST NO SENSE OF SCALE OR ANYTHING"

– WARREN ON *SLAVE ZERO*

much longevity it's got. Like we've already said, it looks lovely and is a real hoot, but what about a few months down the line?

ED: If you can't be bothered to get into it properly you'll get bored very quickly. And that's not the fault of the game, it's more that it's of a type that I don't think many people are into. In Japan, for instance, it'll do really well because of the strong characters and all the little tricks you can learn.

DAN: I don't think it'll have any problem selling over here though.

ED: Not at all, loads of people are going to buy it.

STUART: They should bring out a London version, based on *Metropolis Street Racer*, where you get points for abusing your passengers.

SLAVE ZERO

REVIEWED ON PAGE 84

Big robots in a tiny city. Wreak havoc and destruction in a 100m metal monster and overthrow the evil SovKhan army before they can take over the world. Heard it all before? Maybe the four-player option will find favour. Then again...

ED: I can't really see why games like this ever get made. There's nothing about it that would make you want to go out and buy it, it's such an average thing. It's not a thrilling-looking game or a thrilling concept, and there's nothing brilliant about it that would make you want to play it after having a quick go.

WARREN: It needs to be on something a lot more powerful than Dreamcast, or at least they need to come up with a way of making the cities look more populated. The idea's quite fun, but with the cities the way they are there's just no sense of scale or anything. The camera angle is all wrong as well. People are used to playing first- and third-person perspective and it just looks like that; it doesn't feel like you're this massive robot in a crowded city.

ED: You need designers who have a better concept of what a city should look like and how it should work, because the way it's laid out doesn't look like a city, and the scale of everything is just wrong.

WARREN: It looks like Croydon!

DAN: It's a shame, because Dreamcast is crying out for a really good multiplayer shooter like *GoldenEye* or *Quake* or something, and this could've been it if it'd been done properly.

WARREN: Yeah, you'd never get buildings that big either.

ED: It is the future!

STUART: Yeah, it's meant to be futuristic, like *Blade Runner* or something.

WARREN: If the whole thing did look like *Blade Runner* that would be great, but it blatantly doesn't. And the four-player mode is an abomination.

ED: Yeah, that's terrible.

STUART: I think there are some good parts to the game that you won't necessarily see unless you put some time in.

DAN: Come on then, convince us.

STUART: Well, for one thing it's got a really good mission-based system that stops you from getting too bored. It's not just all the yomping around that it seems, sometimes you're defending a base or protecting a convoy or whatever.

ED: There are *so* many games like this though, and there's nothing to single it out as being special. The controls are all 'slidy' – you feel like you're just being moved around the screen rather than controlling a giant robot.

STUART: The thing I was thinking when I was playing it was comparing it to *Fighting Force 2* [much sniggering from everyone else]. No, it's not that bad. But that was my benchmark: was it better or worse than *Fighting Force 2*?

DAN: Not really something to be proud of, is it: "*Slave Zero* – not quite as bad as *Fighting Force 2*!" says Stuart Dredge, *ODM*.

WARREN: No, you've got to stand by your opinions.

DAN: But would you recommend to someone that they should go out and buy it?

STUART: I'd recommend that people try it out, and I think it is worth a look for the reasons I've explained.

WARREN: I'm still not convinced though. Save your money, folks.

DAN: Unless...

WARREN: Unless you like crap games.

ED: And animé. If you like big robots and animé then you might like it, but to be honest you're more likely to be into *Virtual On: Oratario Tangram*, which is really stylish and Japanese-looking, whereas this just has no imagination, and certainly no style.

STUART: But I think in some ways the content overrides the lack of style, and certainly to begin with I would've agreed with what everyone's saying, but after a decent amount of time on it I think there's more than enough there.

DAN: But a game should grab you straight off, you shouldn't have to work at liking it.

ED: In the end, then, it's just a very average game, and that's a bit of a let down.

RED DOG

REVIEWED ON PAGE 74

Originally slated as a Dreamcast launch title, *Red Dog* is a fast-moving tank shoot 'em up. Once again them pesky aliens are being troublesome, and you need to go and knock them into line.

DAN: Better than *Slave Zero*, and it's got a bit of style about it.

ED: When you say it's got a visual style, it has, but it definitely looks like a British-developed PC game. It looks smooth, the explosions are good and some of the creatures are cool, but it's pretty garish with the colours and all that.

DAN: Not *stylish*, but it has a style.

ED: Exactly. It's not a particularly cool-looking game, but it still has all you need.

DAN: I do like the way your vehicle moves over the terrain. I think that's really well done, certainly in the one-player mode.

ED: The tank looks like a bit of a lightweight, floating and bouncing around.

WARREN: It's not a tank though, is it, really?

ED: More like a quad bike, only they don't roll over. Hang on... Yes they do, don't they?! On Rik Mayall's head, usually.

DAN: It's a shame that they've gone to all the effort of making the physics look and feel right, and it seems like your tank is actually in touch with the ground, but that's not reflected in the sound. All you get is the music and some lame zapping sounds.

ED: The idea is that it's an arcade game through and through. It's not like: "Ooh, I can hear an enemy coming, I'd better be stealthy here," you just shoot everything, and there's no real need for all that.

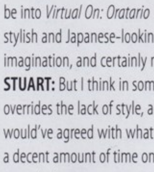
STUART: I like the music though.

WARREN: Yeah, the music's wicked.

ED: It's a very straightforward game. There's no fancy structure, there's no strategy, but it's okay. The four-player is good too – nice and smooth.

DAN: A little bit dull though. I preferred *Toy Commander*'s deathmatch.

WARREN: I'm not convinced about that, but at least you had the choice of vehicles... Anyone fancy a game of pool?



"NOT PARTICULARLY COOL-LOOKING, BUT IT STILL HAS ALL YOU NEED"

– ED ON *RED DOG*

LAP TIME
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THE REAL DEAL

DREAMCAST MAY BOAST A SELECTION OF TOP GAMES BASED ON REAL-WORLD SPORTS, BUT, ASKS **ADAM PHILLIPS**, HOW DO THEY MATCH UP TO THEIR 'ACTUAL REALITY' COUNTERPARTS?

WHEN GAMES DEVELOPERS set about coding their latest and greatest sports simulations, their brief is very simple: to make players feel as if they could be indulging in the real thing.

Titles like *1080 Snowboarding* on N64 and *Gran Turismo* on PlayStation have rewarded players with exactly that feeling – you might not know what it's like to floor the gas pedal of a TVR in real life, but the gaming experience makes you feel like you've got a fair idea of what it could be like.

Bearing this in mind, *ODM* grabbed a handful of Dreamcast games and compared them to their real-world equivalents to see whether their initial attempts at bringing 'actual reality' into the living room have been entirely successful.

TIME
EXTENDED!

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

WHILE WE'VE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO have a sneak go so far, Bizarre Creations' *Metropolis Street Racer* is shaping up to be the essential racing game for Dreamcast. Boasting extensive tracks based on accurately modelled districts in three cities – London, San Francisco and Tokyo – there's also a collection of top-flank motors with which to make like a boy racer and rip up tarmac, including convertibles and hard tops, from the Fiat Barchetta and Alpha GTV to the MGF and Mitsubishi 3000 GT.

With graphics that look incredibly lifelike, *Metropolis Street Racer* offers the only opportunity you'll ever get to bomb around Westminster at 70mph without subsequently getting banned from driving and spending a few months behind bars. "Oh well, who cares?" we thought as we got into a top Japanese sports car for the day. And it all started so well…

REAL LIFE EXPERIENCE

The car: a Honda Integra Type-R, one of Japan's most celebrated road racers. The location: the London streets and sights as featured in Bizarre Creations' potential classic. The mission: not to race, of course, but to see what it's like to be Recaro-seated behind the Momo steering wheel of a car with 190bhp and a 0-60 time of 6.7 seconds, and drive around every motorist's nightmare – the UK's capital.

Afterwards photographer Tanya and I were due to head off into the countryside for some perfectly legal stretching of the car's legs before returning the motor to Honda UK. But it was not to be…

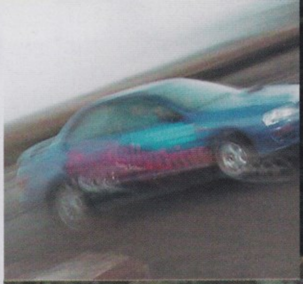
Things begin well, threading the car through the streets of London, drawing looks of admiration from car anoraks who know a top motor when they see one. And drawing looks of bemusement from people who gawp at the huge comedy spoiler stuck on the back of the car.

The game-versus-real-world debate predictably falls to pieces: having to keep your speed legal going across Westminster Bridge; cursing the traffic outside the Houses of Parliament, and praying that John 'Two Jags' Prescott will appear, step out into the road and begin explaining the benefits of overcrowded and overpriced public transport to the oncoming traffic; and driving down the very British Pall Mall in a very Japanese sports car, hoping that Prince Philip will walk out of Buckingham Palace and dare to make some more racist comments as he's thrown over the top of the Honda.

Unfortunately the car's 0-10 time is the only thing that we actually manage to test. Any hopes of reaching 30, never mind the heady speeds featured in *MSR*, are constantly dashed in the face of traffic and a seemingly contagious outbreak of speed bumps. We are, of course, expecting this. What we are not expecting is our encounter with the Volvo.

Parked up near another of the game's locations, Leicester Square, things go distinctly un-*MSR*-shaped. A clapped out, dented brick of a Volvo is attempting to parallel park in front of us. Plenty of space, it appears, as I glance up at the reversing motor. But then watch in horror as the Volvo driver completely misses his space and reverses straight into our car. The result? An

PHOTOS: TANYA CHALKIN, DAN TRENT



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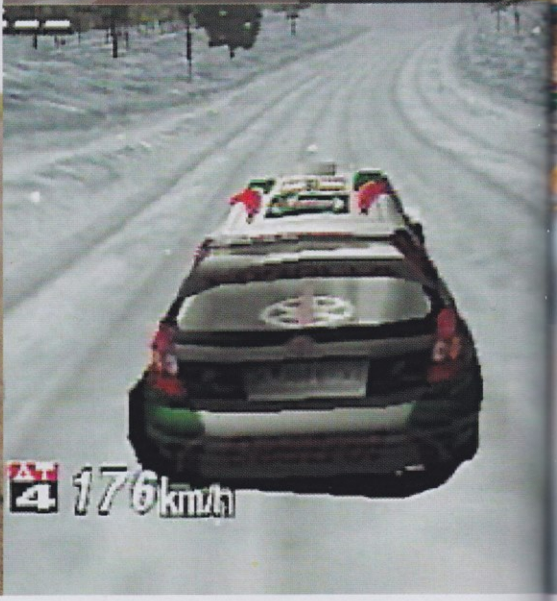


outburst of Northern 'colloquialisms' on my part, and a smashed rear light on the other driver's tank of a car. Plus a gash out of the side of our Honda.

After Tanya has managed to calm my loud swearing down to mere mutterings, and I've swapped details with the Volvo owner, I realise that any hope of heading out into the sticks to really put the car through its paces are as shattered as the Volvo's rear light. Heads hung low, we drive the wounded car back to Honda, realising that the only way we're going to get to road test an Integra proper is by driving it in *MSR*. And after experiencing the madness that is London motoring, we can't help but breath a sigh of relief.

PROS: The Honda is fast and furious, with limpet-like road holding. Well, on paper at least, Detective Constable. It's a true road racer for those who want the handling and performance of a smaller car but who also need the practicalities of a saloon for the needs of everyday living.
CONS: You can forget thrashing your way around London's streets –*MSR* wins hands down. And to export the car to San Fran and Tokyo to have a go there is hardly the most practical of endeavours. Actually, come to think of it, I know this geezer in the freight trade who…
WHERE TO GO: Your local Honda dealership. Alternatively, there are quite a few car clubs and sports car days available up and down the country – you pays your money and then get to take a Ferrari for a spin. Check out the likes of *Top Gear* magazine for more details on the latter.
WHAT IT'LL COST YOU: You'll have to cough up £20,500 to get behind the wheel of a brand new Honda Integra Type-R of your own; low-mileage second-hand ones can be picked up for around £17k. Honda reliability comes as standard.

SEGA RALLY 2
VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST EAGERLY awaited titles at Dreamcast's launch; Sega's flagship arcade racer that offered up a fine selection of mud rompers over a variety of terrains. While boasting arcade-perfect graphics, the only real question was whether the arcade game could offer enough longevity as a console experience.

The answer is: very nearly – but no cigar. The Sega bods slapped in a ten-year championship for the hardcore race fan, and a racing experience that was instantly accessible and just as engrossing as its arcade counterpart. For a while.

Unfortunately, even with the tracks offering different routes and a well-designed difficulty curve, there's always a nagging feeling that the game veers towards the superficial side, especially when it comes to the handling of the cars – you can't spin the cars off the road. Or rip off the car's panelling by slamming into a tree. But what do we know? We haven't even tried the real thing. Until now.

REAL LIFE EXPERIENCE

It's grim up north. Well it is in East Yorkshire, anyroad. There is an upside though: the roads. Glorious 'B' and country roads that sweep across the featureless plateau. Twisting corners. High-speed straights… It's a boy racer's seventh heaven.

It's not surprising, then, to discover that the region also has one of Britain's top Rally Schools, Rally Drive. Approaching its location on what appears to be an abandoned airfield out in the middle of nowhere, you're first greeted by the sight of a rundown building and some battered VW Golfs in racing livery (hardly as fancy as the hardware on offer in *Sega Rally 2*).

Any doubts disappear though when photographer Dan and I notice two Subaru Imprezza Turbos parked in the vicinity as we troop into the building, arriving late for the session's briefing. Howard Pattison, a top rally driver himself and the school's head honcho, is busy wrapping up his joke-laden introduction to the dozen or so eager rally driver wannabes.

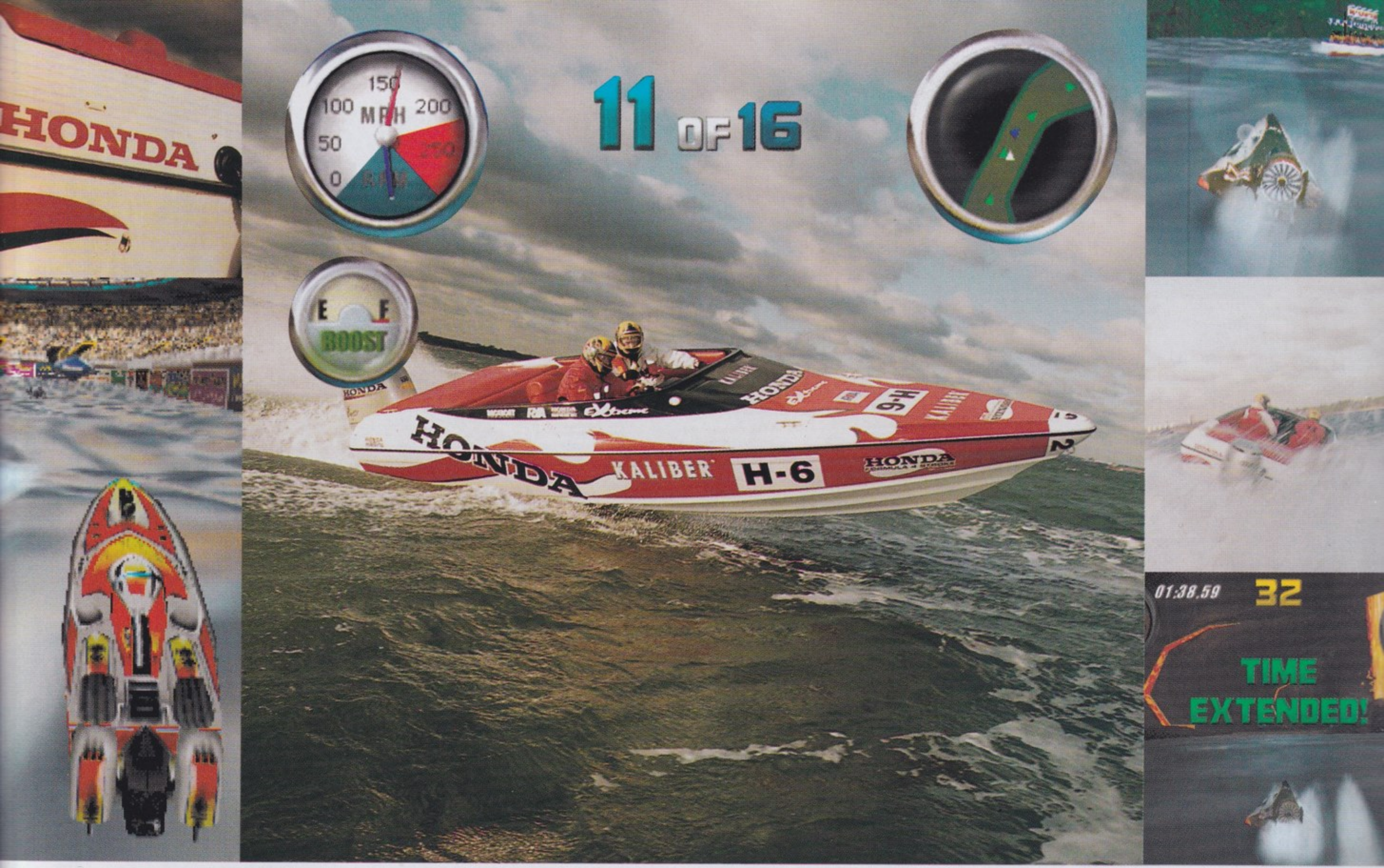
Armed with some brief instructions, I head out to the first part of my rally afternoon, the gravel track, clamber into the Golf GTi with Howard and pull out on to the track – which is basically one big muddy, wet and rut-ridden course marked out with stacks of tyres.

Several warm-up laps ensue, with me learning the basics of steering a car sideways round corners. Howard constantly barks instructions from the passenger seat: "Power. Lift. Brake. Turn. Power…" and offers pointers when I go wrong.

By now *SR2* is a faded memory in my adrenalin-flushed brain. Sliding in and out corners; throwing the wheel from lock to lock; spinning the car 720 degrees into a wall of tyres… everything that is utterly illegal on Her Majesty's highways is encouraged here. Compared to this, *SR2*'s punter-friendly gameplay, where there's no opportunity to really lose control of the car, seems embarrassingly tame.

Next I head off to the tarmac course with another instructor, Andrew Scholfield. While disappointed that I don't get to drive one of the Subarus, our Golf GTi 16v is more than capable of inducing a broad grin when you floor the gas pedal.

The course is a mass of straights, long corners, hairpins and everything else that a formula one fan beats off to every F1 season. Our mission is to get



round the track as quickly and safely as possible. After a couple of demo laps from Andy, once again I'm behind the wheel.

"Take the course at whatever speed you feel most comfortable with," offers Andy. Throwing the car into corners with the front wheels digging in, *SR2* is now utterly forgotten. Indeed, you could've taken all the racing games ever created and burned the lot for all I cared. In my most fever-pitched moments, I envisage taking up a full-time rallying career and having rally groupies fling themselves at me.

After achieving a decent lap time, we head back to HQ for a debriefing. After having the piss deservedly taken out of me for spinning off on the gravel section during the timed lap, and with my pleas for the school to offer me a scholarship (like they did for rally champ Richard Burns) falling on deaf ears, Dan and I drive off into the night, my buoyed spirits sinking slowly with the realisation that I'm heading back to the land of road rules and speed cameras.

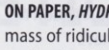
PROS: The most fun you can have on four wheels. Ludicrous cornering, high-speed tracks, adrenalin-inducing 'gameplay'… Real-world rallying makes *SR2* look too tame for comfort.
CONS: For the average punter it's a pretty costly experience to indulge in on a regular basis. And you *always* want longer in the car.
WHERE TO GO: Give the Yorkshire-based school a bell on 01430 827 162. And be sure to get the address for the actual rally course – it's 45 minutes away from their office. We made that mistake. Ahem.
WHAT IT'LL COST YOU: You pay £99 for half a day to rally in Golfs on tarmac and gravel, £169 for a longer session in Golfs and Sierra Cosworths, or for £179 you can indulge in their Pro Drive session with the BMW 3 series and Subaru Imprezza Turbo.

HYDRO THUNDER

VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

ON PAPER, *HYDRO THUNDER* SOUNDS LIKE the business: a mass of ridiculously powerful boats, some over-the-top tracks that'll have you leaping from waterfalls and smashing the opposition off the course, and the obligatory top-notch graphics.

Playing the game though reveals an average experience – while it's addictive hammering round the courses always on the look out for those vital speed power-ups, the game mechanics are less convincing – the handling feels uninvolving, the on-screen sensation of speed is a tad underwhelming and the overall gameplay is uninspiring. I guess we knew which experience would win out at the end of the day before we even strapped ourselves into the real deal…



REAL LIFE EXPERIENCE

"Hell! It's… freezing!" I gasp to Dan, the photographer, as we stand shivering on a pontoon overlooking the river Hamble on the south coast. As ice-cold winds whip across the water taking bites out of exposed bits of our flesh, thoughts of sitting in a warm living room playing *Hydro Thunder* creep across the mind.

Bobbing up and down in the water in front of us is the reason why we're here: the Honda-powered boat is the key component of Honda's new Formula 4-Stroke Race Series. In this weather the vessel looks decidedly unappealing without any kind of windscreen to take on the turbulent wind and waters out in the bay. But with an engine from the Honda Accord 2.2 slapped on the back, and the ability to reach 51mph, you know that this is one seriously desirable and fast bit of kit.

We meet Steve Curtis, three times winner of the world Class I (16 litre) offshore championship, who's built like an oak tree and possesses one of the firmest handshakes in history. With his business partner Peter Curragan, a couple of other hacks and two old timers out for a spot of powerboat retraining in tow, we prepare to take the pocket rocket out for a spin.

Cut to 20 minutes later and we're aboard the 'bin liner', a decidedly unsleek American motor cruiser that's trying its hardest to keep up with the Honda that's streaking on ahead of us in the distance with Steve at the helm. We're allegedly heading out to a 'calmer' area of the bay so we can all have a go in the powerboat.

Needless to say there's nothing calm about the whole experience. The boat judders against the waves as we race along, while the others discuss the monster powerboat Steve normally drives – the Spirit Of Norway, a catamaran powered by two Lamborghini eight-litre V12 engines that spew out 1,000bhp a piece. As Steve tells us later: "The idea is to get the boat going so fast that it floats across the surface of the water with only the propellers underneath the surface. If you turn the steering wheel too hard though, you'll flip over." Thankfully we're not allowed to play with that particular powerboat today because first you need special training – namely being dunked into a swimming pool while in an F-16 fighter plane cockpit and having to swim your way out.

After another journo has had a spin in the Honda, it's my turn for a ride, and I nervously clamber on board the dinky Honda. First Steve tells me to put on a helmet "not because it's dangerous out here, but without it your face would freeze off". Then I have to attach my leg to the emergency cut-off cord. Which basically means if we're flung from the powerboat the engine shuts down and we can climb back on board.

00
BONUS 7!!
YOU WIN!

Then we're off. Slamming the accelerator stick forward, the boat piloted by Steve leaps into action – it spends most of the time either flying through the air, or crashing down into the water with enough force to shove the bottom of your spine up to near your neck.

"Kin'. 'Ell! This. Is. Bloo. Dee. Fa. St!" is about all I can stutter as the boat slams continuously against the waves like a hydraulic drill. Unlike in *Hydro Thunder*, where the boat could do with going a little faster, in the real deal it feels like it's going at 100mph, never mind 40mph. I burst into laughter at the accompanying adrenalin rush as Steve throws the boat round with ease. We corner sharply and then floor it back towards the 'bin liner', which is by now a mere speck on the horizon.

Finally it's my turn to get behind the helm. Steve briefly goes over the operating instructions – the accelerator, the wheel, the trimming… The trimming? "Never mind," I think, "just point the bugger and go fast, right?"

Right. Off we go again, this time with me at the wheel and grinning like an idiot, determined to try and get as much 'air' as possible with the boat. The steering is a bit of a bind, namely because you must keep one hand on the accelerator at all times. Indeed, at various points Steve gestures for me to stop using both hands to turn the wheel.

As I race my way backwards and forwards across the bay, the line that keeps coming into my mind is: "I gotta get me one of these!" Then all too soon it's time to head in and retreat to the warm confines of a pub to find out how much it costs to get your hands on one.

PROS: Take a syringe, fill it with adrenalin and then inject it directly into your heart (no, no, no, we don't mean really. It's just a metaphor, see) – that's powerboating. It's the ultimate buzz. It's a crying shame that *Hydro Thunder* doesn't capture some of the excitement experienced when doing it for real.

CONS: The obvious cost issue aside, this isn't a sport for the console couch potato. You need grim determination as your spine is pummelled by the waves, and you need to have a strong stomach for the sea. On calmer days though, you'll have no such problems.

WHERE TO GO: Honda are running test days for prospective buyers, so pop along to your local showroom, act all interested, then blag yourself a free day behind the wheel of a top powerboat. (You didn't hear that from us though, okay?)

WHAT IT'LL COST YOU: £20,000. To be blunt though, it's peanuts compared to the prices you normally have to pay to get involved in powerboat racing at competition level. Think about setting up a syndicate with your mates. Chopping the price down into smaller chunks and sharing the boat will make it a more feasible proposition. Also remember that Honda's boat has created a new powerboat league (with cash rewards), so five-figure sponsorships from companies looking for tax breaks is a real possibility.

"SC'S GRAPHICS ARE PERFECT, THE ANIMATION SEAMLESS"

SOUL CALIBUR

VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

DREAMCAST'S KILLER APP. The one we'd all been waiting for. And it delivered big-time. With an intelligent and novel one-player game structure and an unfeasibly addictive two-player option, every imaginable martial art has been thrown into *SC*'s mix, creating a beat 'em up that has left many a PlayStation owner weeping into their copy of *Tekken 3*.

Soul Calibur's graphics are perfect, the animation seamless and lifelike, and the sublime gameplay makes the fighting *feel* like it could be the real thing as you land a kick followed by a lethal slash to the opponent's torso. A truly top-notch experience.

REAL LIFE EXPERIENCE

They say revenge is a dish best served cold. In my case though, it was to be dished out in a large, sweaty, out-of-breath portion. You see, Dan, our photographer, has had to watch me at the wheel of many a fine piece of macho machinery while he's had to stand there in the cold on the sidelines, taking snaps and whinging about being hungry. As someone pointed out, being a photographer is like being the bridesmaid but never the bride.

Imagine his quiet glee, then, when on a sub-zero December night I find myself in the East End of London, about to embark on my first lesson in the Japanese martial art featured so heavily in *Soul Calibur* – kendo. Confronted by men and women dressed in

full kendo armour and bearing split-bamboo practice swords called shinais is enough to send a shiver down anyone's spine. What's really put the wind up me though is that I'm going to have to… exercise! No more pushing buttons on a joypad or relying on engines to get me round. No, this experience is all down to me and my '40-cigs-a-day' physical prowess.'

> "QUICK-FIX JUNKIES SHOULD STICK TO *SOUL CALIBUR*"

After being introduced to the group, Keith Hazlewood, membership secretary of the British Kendo Association, hands me over to Clive Sinclaire, who boasts a fourth dan in kendo, for my first taste of the martial art. I'm led into the main leisure centre hall and am introduced to the basic principles of kendo moves: 'Men' is where you bring your sword down on your opponent's head; 'Do' is an attack to the trunk; 'Kote' is a slash that'll remove the other person's hand; and 'Tsuski' is a thrust to the neck that in real life would puncture the Adam's apple of your opponent and let you cook it like a marshmallow on the end of your sword afterwards.

I'm swiftly passed in to the capable hands of Anna Stone, a third dan in Kendo, for my first lesson in the 'Men' attack, and am joined by four other newbies – Stephanie, Richard, David and Beano. Let's be frank: it's all rather comical at first. Learning how to step towards one another correctly and deliver the blow is fine, but then you have to learn the kendo 'shuffle', which enables you to zip along by sliding your right foot in front of your left foot while delivering the head attack with the warrior's cry of 'Men!'

Picture if you will, then, five people looking like the knights of Ni out of *Monty Python's Holy Grail* as they prance around in circles shouting out 'Men!' at the top of their voices while hitting the instructor with a bamboo sword. It's probably Julian Clary's wildest S/M wet dream come true.

But then things get serious as Keith (third dan kendo) steps in pronouncing: "No more Mr Nice Guy. Time to make you all work." And boy does he. For 15 minutes we're put through a punishing exercise of attacking him relentlessly. Stephanie manages to cut her toe open and liberally sprinkle the hall floor with blood, while I, according to onlookers, go a distinct grey colour as I head towards what could have been my first coronary.

Glancing over at the experienced group, I realise that this is no comedy though – they're 'playing' a piggy-in-the-middle game where two opponents fight it out at lightning speed, and the winner stays on as the next combatant steps in. This is serious stuff, and at times you catch glimpses of *Soul Calibur*-style speed and movement.

Finally, Keith pulls out some kendo armour, swiftly dresses me, then proceeds to demonstrate the kendo moves on me as they should be done. Thwack! A cut to my helmet. My ears begin ringing with the impact. All accompanied by a war cry from Keith that's loud and sincere enough to make me jump on the spot. Thump! Despite me wearing guards, Keith's blow to my wrist hurts like a bastard. Indeed, by the end of the session I'm ready to ditch ancient Eastern combat and resort to more modern Western techniques – ie pulling out a gun and shooting my opponent in the face.

Thankfully the evening's session ends up in a pub over a few pints. "We do get people coming along who've played on consoles and want to do the real thing," says Keith. "It can be a something of a wake-up call for them to say the least! But if you persevere and commit to kendo, it is very rewarding."

So how long would it take to reach *Soul Calibur* standards? "They modelled the kendo moves in that game from a seventh dan Japanese kendo expert," Keith informs me. And how long do you reckon it would it take for someone to make seventh dan? "About 28 years," offers Clive.

Over to you, Dreamcast…

PROS: You get to hit people with big sticks! And, unlike with *Soul Calibur*, you've actually managed to get your Homer Simpson-like ass off that sofa for a few minutes.
CONS: It's going to take you many, many years, young grasshopper, to get even remotely as good as the characters in *Soul Calibur*. Quick-fix junkies should stick to *SC*, while the rest of us should partake in a sport that is infinitely more interesting and involving than any jog or gym session.
WHERE TO GO: There's a kendo club near you. To find out where, give Keith a call on 0171 515 8653 and he'll point you in the right direction. Also check out their website at www.users.dircon.co.uk/~bka/index2.htm
WHAT IT'LL COST YOU: At Keith's place it's £4 for a session (newbies need only tracksuit bottoms and a T-shirt). To buy the full armour kit and bamboo sword, you're looking at nearly £500. Or you can go second-hand but, as Anna pointed out, you'll end up practising kendo in someone else's sweat. Nice.

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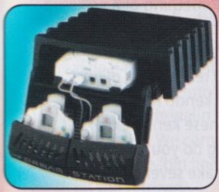

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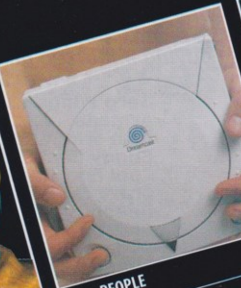

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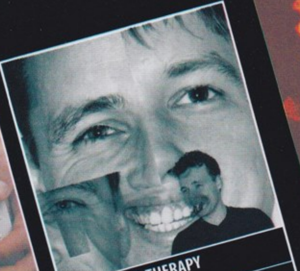

△ GROUP THERAPY
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VIBE©

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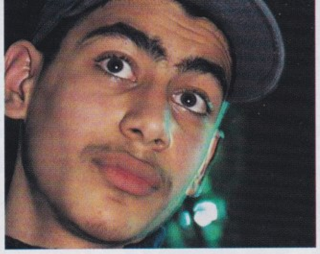
WELCOME TO THE SECTION WHERE YOU DO ALL THE TALKING WHILE WE SIT BACK AND PUT OUR FEET UP. UNLEASH THOSE SORDID STORIES AND CONFOUNDING QUESTIONS...



△ FARHAN, 14, STUDENT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?

Five foot something.

GIANTS OR TOWERS?

Towers.

FAVOURITE GAME?

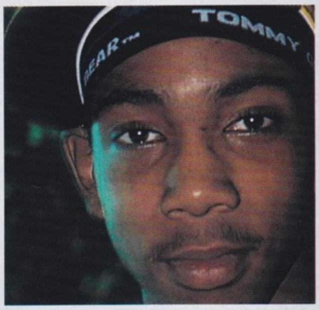
Power Stone.

FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?

I don't know any but my mate plays for Towers.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?

The gameplay is fast but I'd need more time.



△ CARL, 14, STUDENT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?

Six three and still growing.

GIANTS OR TOWERS?

Guess! [Oh, go on then. Towers].

FAVOURITE GAME?

Power Stone.

FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?

Kobe Bryant of the Lakers.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?

The dunks are wicked!

△ JUNIOR CAPERS, 26, PLAYER FROM EVERTON, NEW JERSEY

HOW TALL ARE YOU?

Very! About six five.

GIANTS OR TOWERS?

I've got a friend who plays for Manchester Giants, but I also got a couple of friends who play for the Towers so I don't know!

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?

Adding a referee really makes it realistic.

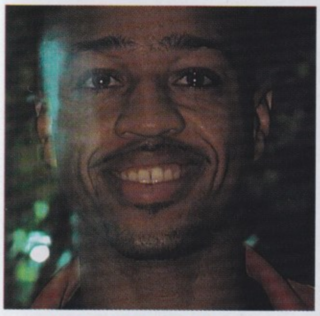
Dreamcast
RIBO

HOOOOPLA!

DAN TRENT AND THE DREAMCAST POD HEADED TO CRYSTAL PALACE, HOME OF THE LONDON TOWERS BASKETBALL TEAM, FOR AN EXCLUSIVE *NBA 2K* SHOWCASE

THE LONDON TOWERS are one of the top basketball teams in the country: they won the national championships last year and are currently heading the Southern Conference. We went to see them play Northern Conference leaders, the Manchester Giants, and spoke to fans and players to find out what they thought of the most exciting and realistic basketball game ever.

- *For London Towers info and tickets, ring 020 8776 7755 or check their website on www.london-towers.co.uk*

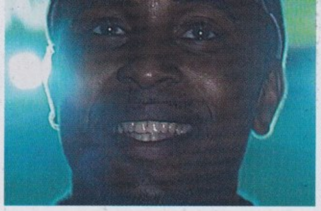


△ JASON, 24, PLAYER

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Six foot.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Giants, I got a good friend plays for 'em.
FAVOURITE GAME?
NBA Live 2000.
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Vince Carter.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
The graphics are crisper and it looks just like a TV broadcast.

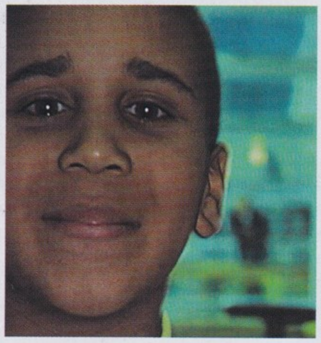
△ JEFF, 37, CHRIS'S MATE

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Five ten.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Watching the form!
FAVOURITE GAME?
The dog chewed the leads on my old console so I haven't played for years.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
The graphics are really impressive – bit tricky though.



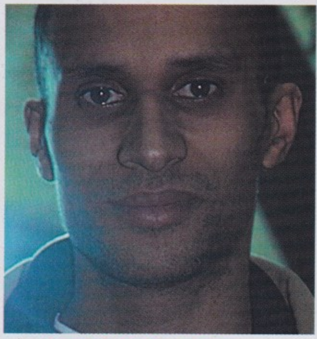
△ CLIVE, 27, SPORTS OFFICER

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Six two.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Well, I work here so…
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Michael Jordan.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
They've captured the feel of the game.



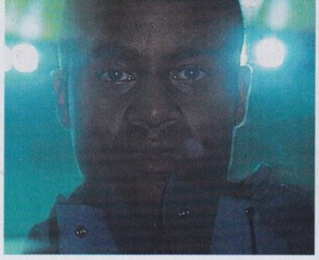
△ TYRONE, 9, MASCOT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Er… don't know. [We reckon four foot one].
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Towers of course!
FAVOURITE GAME?
Mortal Kombat Trilogy.
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Michael Jordan.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
It's really good. I've decided I'm going to save up for one.



△ MARLON, 25, STUDENT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Five nine.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Neither. My mate plays for Thames Valley so it has to be them.
FAVOURITE GAME?
Championship Manager.
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Ellen Arvison from Philidelphia.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
It's great, especially the dunking.



△ HECTOR, 24, RAPPER

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Six foot four.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
I'm hoping the Towers win.
FAVOURITE GAME?
FIFA '99.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
Nice moveability, and it looks great.

△ LAURA, 14, STUDENT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Er, five foot two?
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Towers.
FAVOURITE GAME?
A PC NBA game.
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Michael Jordan.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
It looks just like the real thing.

△ ROSA LEE, 20, STUDENT

HOW TALL ARE YOU?
Five eight.
GIANTS OR TOWERS?
Towers, of course.
FAVOURITE GAME?
Haven't really got one.
FAVOURITE NBA PLAYER?
Kobe Bryant from the Lakers.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE GAME?
Excellent, the replays are superb. They're really detailed.

YOU KNOW YOU'VE HIT THE BIG TIME WHEN…

…YOUR GAMING SKILLS SAVE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY'S LIVES

Twenty-one-year-old Yank Victor Didra believes that the car crash he was involved in could have been fatal if he hadn't played driving games in his spare time

"I'VE BEEN PLAYING driving games since I first got into software back when I was five. Before the car accident when I was 15, I'd spent a fair bit of time on the likes of *Test Drive 3*. It was great, because if you were trying to avoid smashing into a car, it wasn't a bad thing to go on to the other side of the road. In most driving games you're not constrained by the rules of the road, you do whatever you've got to do to avoid crashing.

"When I was 15 I had a learner's permit, which means you have to have someone sitting in the passenger seat next to you who's had a licence for a few years. I was driving back from a family vacation on the coast in our old suburban, with my dad next to me and my mother and two brothers in the back.

"It was night, and we had our tent trailer attached to the car which reduced the car's agility and acceleration. We were on a regular road – one lane for us, the other for oncoming traffic. I was driving along at a normal speed when I saw car headlights up ahead of us, and they began to curve into our lane.

"I remember thinking: 'Okay, what's going on here?' My dad said something like: 'Do you see it?' I was like: 'I see it, I see it!' The oncoming car had drifted so far into our lane that I decided to punch the gas pedal and go into the oncoming lane. There was nowhere else to pull over into – on the left side was a guard rail, and over that was the Columbia river; on the right-hand side there was a long drop.

"So I went left, and almost made it past the other car which was by now completely in the wrong lane. It was obvious even then that the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. He woke up just as we were about to pass each other in the wrong lanes and jerked back to our side.

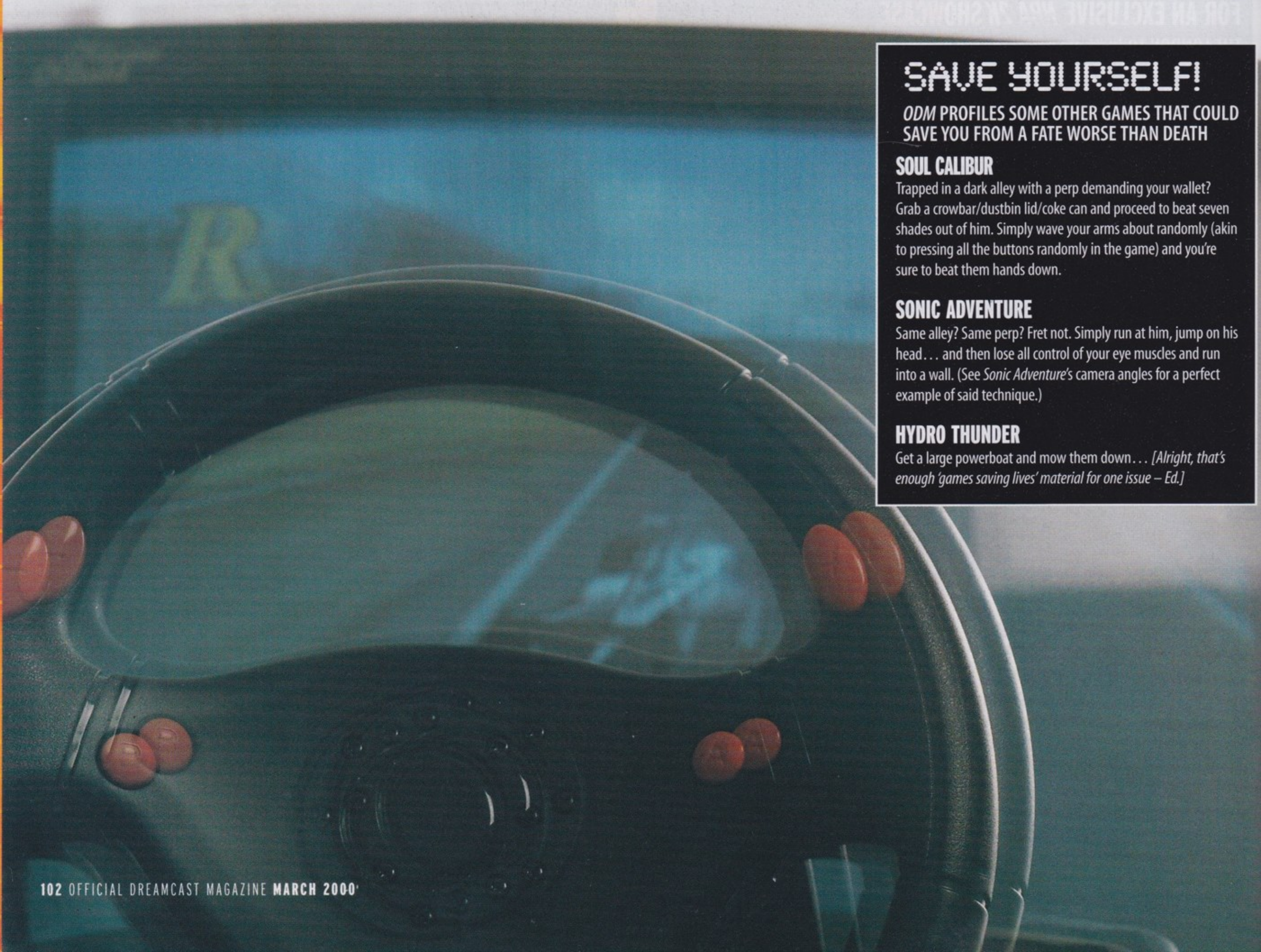
"We just glanced each other's cars, but we still totalled both vehicles. He spun out, but thankfully he was fine and didn't have a passenger. If he had they would have been whacked, because his car was messed up real bad. We got out and everyone was okay.

"The cops came, and the sheriff was like: 'Good job. You're not supposed to go into the other lane, but if you hadn't you would've had a head-on collision and probably been killed.'

"My dad said: 'I never would have never gone into the other lane, because I've been driving so long that I would've stayed on the right side of road.' I was like: 'Well, you know, I've been playing videogames all my life. Which ever side I go on doesn't matter as long as I don't crash.'

"They all laughed a little bit. I know that during the incident all I was doing was kicking into game mode – there was a car heading towards me, and I'd seen the same situation in the many driving games I'd played. So going into the 'wrong' lane seemed natural – it was like a reflex.

"My parents had always argued that games were bad for me. They're a little more accepting these days! I really think games can save lives. I mean, look at me – we didn't crash because of my experiences with driving games."



SAVE YOURSELF!

***ODM* PROFILES SOME OTHER GAMES THAT COULD SAVE YOU FROM A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH**

SOUL CALIBUR

Trapped in a dark alley with a perp demanding your wallet? Grab a crowbar/dustbin lid/coke can and proceed to beat seven shades out of him. Simply wave your arms about randomly (akin to pressing all the buttons randomly in the game) and you're sure to beat them hands down.

SONIC ADVENTURE

Same alley? Same perp? Fret not. Simply run at him, jump on his head… and then lose all control of your eye muscles and run into a wall. (See *Sonic Adventure*'s camera angles for a perfect example of said technique.)

HYDRO THUNDER

Get a large powerboat and mow them down… *[Alright, that's enough 'games saving lives' material for one issue – Ed.]*

YOU KNOW LIFE'S TOUGH WHEN...

...YOUR CONSOLE GETS FRIED

What happens to a Sega Saturn when it's hit by lightning? Ask Yank Tom Williams. He found out the hard way

"I LIVE IN THE MID-WEST, and as you guys are probably aware we're known for having some pretty fierce storms out here: tornadoes by the truckload, and in this case forked lightning that isn't just spectacular, but also fairly deadly when it comes to consumer goods.

"I remember clearly the evening when my Saturn went head to head with a bolt of lightning. At around 5pm it was starting to get windy outside, and the radio said that there was a big storm brewing that would break in a couple of hours. My wife Sarah thought it would be a good idea if I stopped playing on my Saturn and went down to the local store in town and picked up some provisions.

"I remember pausing the game I was playing, telling my two kids, Paul and Amy, not to play on it – I'd spent an hour on *Knights* already and didn't want to have to start over. So I got in my 4x4 and headed down into town. The wind was picking up and the sky had turned a dark grey – not a good sign. I stopped off at the store, picked up enough groceries and headed back to the car. It was about 6pm by this point, and it started raining. Heavily.

"I threw my stuff in the car as I was pelted with rain which had the force of a power shower. On the way home I saw flashes of lightning on the horizon and heard the heavy rumble of thunder. I remember thinking: 'This is going to be a big one' and flooring the accelerator to get back to the house. Call me old-fashioned, but I don't like my kids and wife being alone in weather like this.

"As I drove up the hill towards my house, I could see that Sarah had turned on the lights and was looking out of the kitchen window at the storm. As I got closer, she spotted my headlights and waved. I flashed my lights back at her. Then, out of nowhere it seemed, there was a sudden flash of forked lightning very close to the house. The ensuing thunder was deafening. Nothing to worry about, I thought, my family are safe and indoors and I'm in my car.

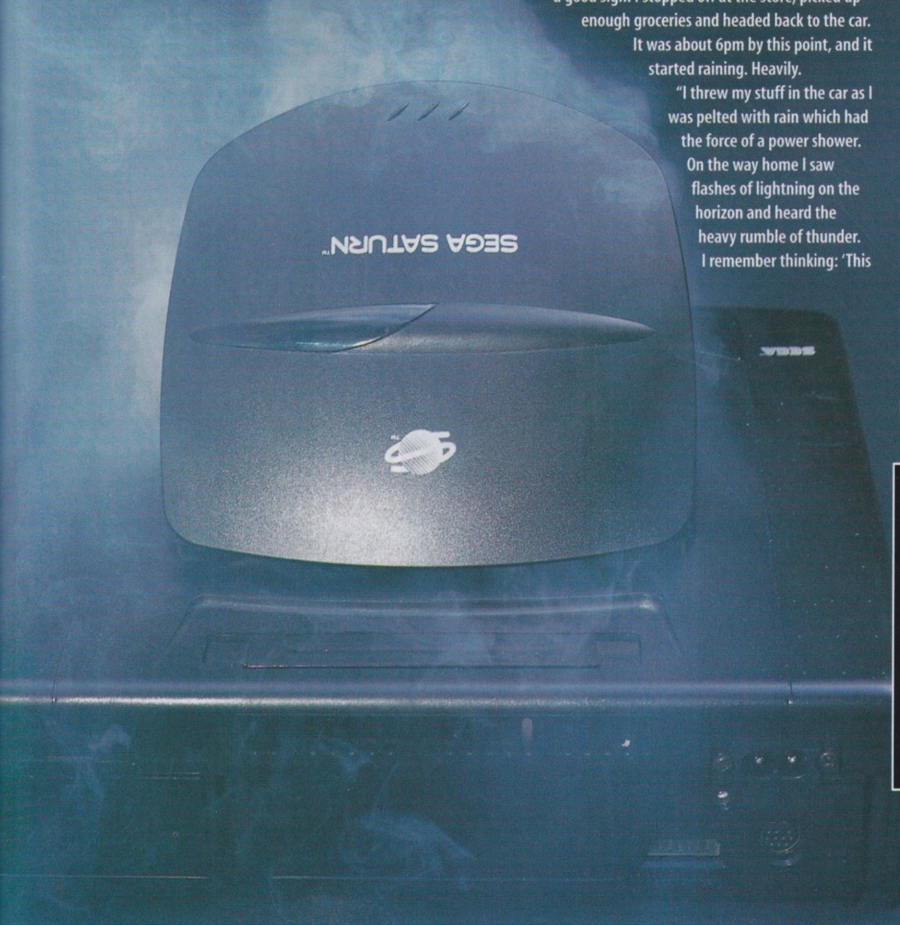
"A few seconds later there was another burst of lightning. This time though it hit the TV aerial on top of the house. There was a bright flash as the aerial lit up for a split second. I remember throwing the car round the final corner at a ridiculous speed, pulling up outside the house and racing in, calling out for Sarah and the kids. They, of course, were fine, if perhaps a little freaked by the noise of the thunder – apart from Paul, who loves the sound.

"But my Sega Saturn and television were another story. My Saturn wouldn't turn on. And while the TV would, everything it displayed had a distinct green hue to it. Apparently the current from the lightning had passed down the TV aerial and pretty much fried everything in its way. It's a very rare occurrence, but trust me to be the exception to the rule.

"I wasn't too upset about the television – it was on its way out anyway – but the Saturn seemed to have had it. I've got a whole bunch of games for it as well, and getting your hands on a Saturn now isn't the easiest of things where I live.

"I've heard a lot about Dreamcast though, and that you can go online with it. I've also heard that there are plenty of sites where you can pick up second-hand gear, so I'm going to buy a Dreamcast and then track down a Saturn replacement.

"From now on though, whenever there's a storm warning I'll make sure that my console is disconnected from the aerial.



WHAT A SIZZLER!

WEATHER: STORM IN A TEACUP, OR A REAL THREAT?

With something in the region of 1,800 thunderstorms active at any given moment all over the world, stories such as Tom's are not so surprising. Indeed, the USA alone gets around 100,000 thunderstorms a year, and lightning itself has been known to electrocute people, start fires, bugger up electrical equipment and slice trees in half. Roughly 10,000 forest fires are started each year because of lightning strikes.

But don't fret too much about being hit by the forked fury. Most thunderstorm damage is caused by straight-line winds blowing at more than 100mph. Now how reassuring is that?

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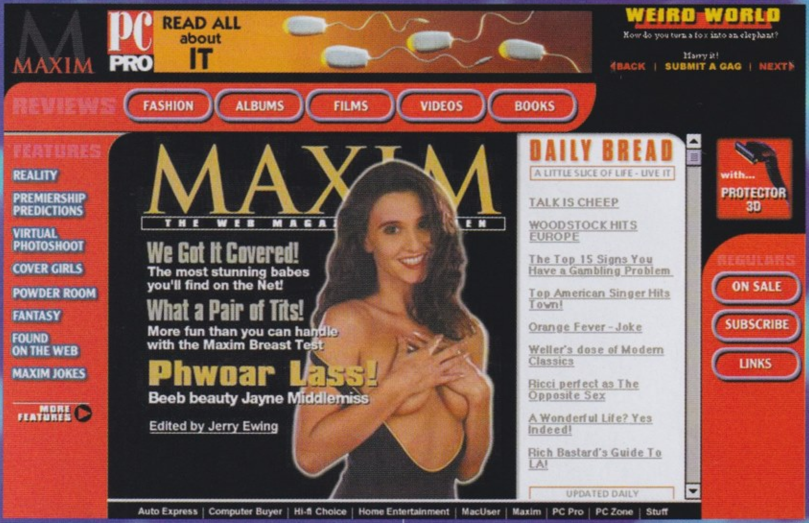
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Marry it!

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AND MUCH, MUCH MORE...

YOU KNOW YOU'RE OBSESSED WHEN...

...YOU STRIP TO SAVE YOUR DREAMCAST

'Mike' is a tad embarrassed. Wouldn't you be if you had to bare all to save your console collection?

"I'VE BEEN OBSESSED with consoles and collecting them for the last 15 years. I love my software, but hardware is my real passion. I have to get the latest and greatest.

"Perhaps the thirst for something new explains why in the first month of owning a Dreamcast I blew *all* my money on everything to do with it. I, of course, went out and bought the basic system straight away. No problem there. Then I bought a VM unit, and filled it up with data so quickly that I thought I'd better go and buy another one. Or two.

"I then fell for the idea of getting all my mates in for huge multiplayer sessions. So I went out and purchased three new joypads. And two rumble packs. And an arcade stick. And for good measure a keyboard. I quickly amassed a collection of about ten games, and ended up spending nearly a grand on all things Dreamcast.

"And then the real-world bills started coming in. 'Okay, I can handle these,' I thought. 'I don't have kids. Or a mortgage.' I just told myself off for going quite so Sega-crazy. Unfortunately all those hours on the phone and time spent online discovering the wonders of the Web spawned a colossal phone bill. 'Bloody hell,' I thought, 'Christmas is coming up as well and I have no money whatsoever.' Then it dawned on me that the only way to cover my ass financially would be to flog my entire console collection!

"A couple of days later I was mulling over my dire position with a mate in the local when he had an idea. He knew a bloke who was holding a series of 'ladies' nights' in a pub. They had a bunch of decent male strippers, but were looking for male members of the public to 'warm up' the ladies, so to speak, by stripping down to their undies. Strictly tongue in cheek, he said, and reckoned that if I did three of the nights I could claw back some much-needed cash quickly.

"I'm no fat bastard, but I'm hardly Arnie. I said no. But after the fourth pint I thought about my Dreamcast, the games and all the other consoles in my collection. This fatal track of thought got me all nostalgic. After eight pints I ended up phoning the bloke that night.

"Two days later I found myself in a large pub, about to walk up to the 'stage' in front of 50-odd women. Not mild-mannered, well-behaved birds, mind you, but the noisiest, crudest bunch I've ever witnessed in my life. I was terrified!

"To cut a long story short, after being introduced by the 'compere' as an 'amateur to warm you ladies up', I got up from my table near the back, walked through the sea of women and went up on stage. After stripping (surprisingly well, I might add), I got down to my undies. Bloody hell! They were shouting for more, and I remember thinking: 'They love me!' But there was no way on God's earth they were going to cop an eyeful of my meat and two veg. Not even for my Dreamcast.

"I quickly strode off the stage to whoops and cheers – and loved every minute of it! I went over to the bar, where I was congratulated by all and sundry, bought drinks for the rest of the night and was given a mass of tips as well.

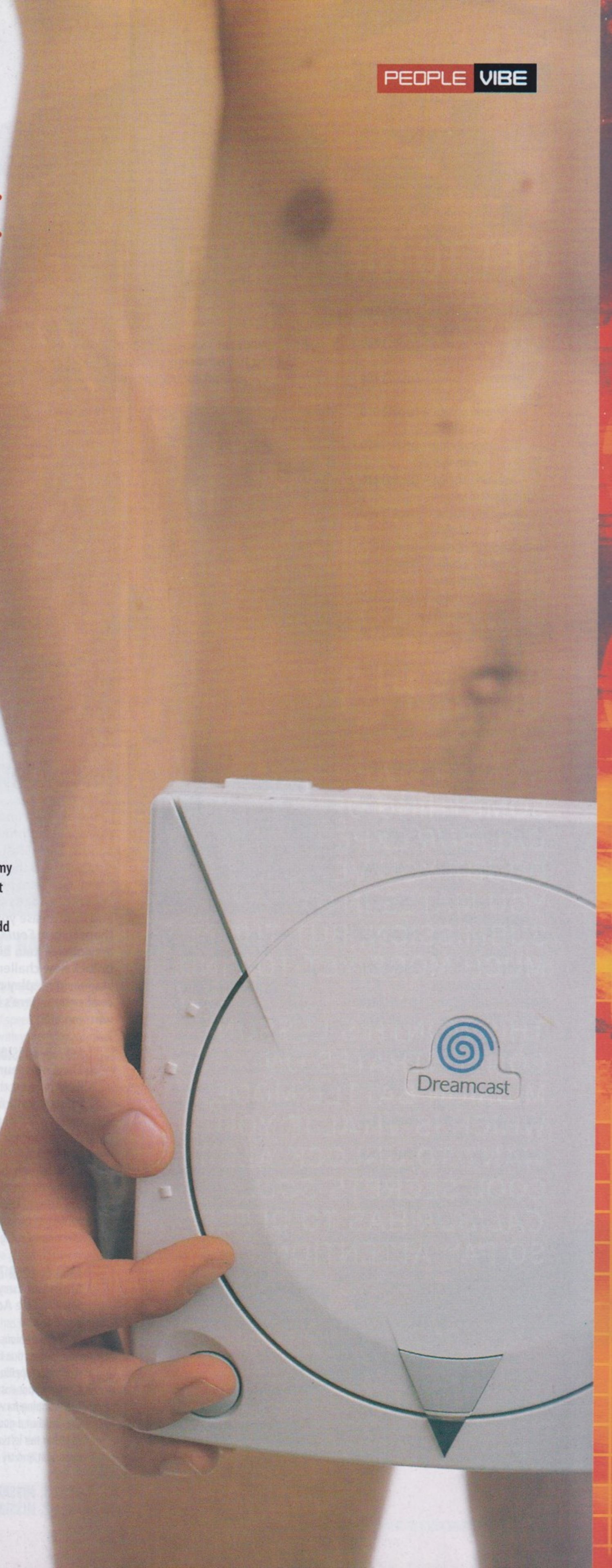
"I did the same thing the following week and ended up with enough to pay off all my debts, keep hold of my console collection and get plastered in the process. The only thing left to do now is to tell my rather straight-laced girlfriend that I've become a part-time stripper.

"Maybe I should have got rid of my Dreamcast after all."

KER-CHING!

BLIMEY, MIKE, HOW MUCH DID YOU ACTUALLY END UP SPENDING?

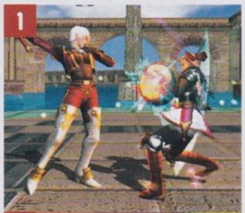
Here's a lad whose money obviously burns a hole in his pocket until his nads are singed. And his Dreamcast shopping bill? One DC console: £199.99. Three VM units: £59.97. One keyboard: £19.99. Three joypads: £59.97. Ten games: £399.90. Two rumble packs: £39.98. One arcade stick: £34.99. Overall sum: £814.79. Can anyone out there top that? If so, let us know.



GET TO GRIPS WITH SOUL CALIBUR GUIDE PT 3

BY NOW YOU'RE PROBABLY SOMETHING OF A *SOUL CALIBUR* EXPERT, AND NO DOUBT YOU'VE COMBO'D YOU MATES INTO SUBMISSION. BUT THERE'S MUCH MORE YET TO FIND.

THIS MONTH'S LESSON CONCENTRATES ON MISSION BATTLE MODE, WHICH IS VITAL IF YOU WANT TO UNLOCK ALL THE COOL SECRETS *SOUL CALIBUR* HAS TO OFFER. SO PAY ATTENTION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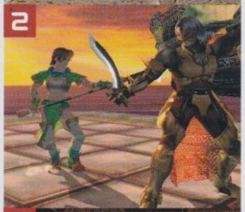
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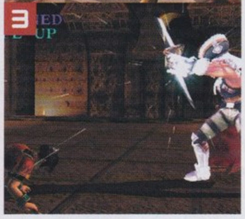
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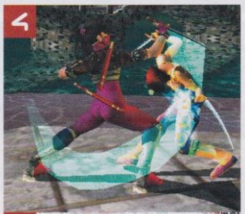
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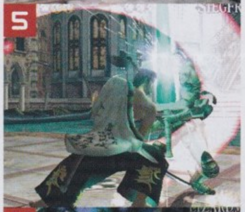
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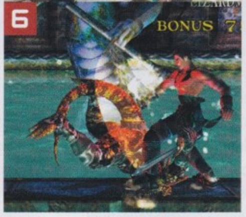
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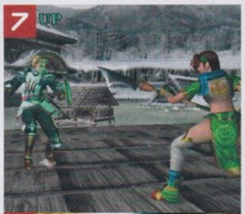
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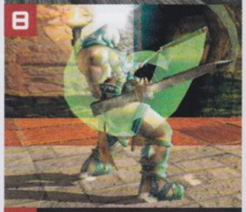
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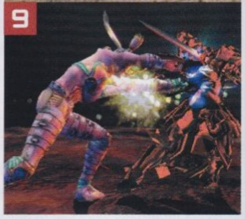
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MISSION BATTLE

How it works: choose a character and prove your worth against Edge Master, then travel around the world fighting to earn points. We all know that points win prizes, and in this case you can use them to buy *Soul Calibur* artwork. Certain bits of art unlock new challenges, fighting stages, gameplay modes and cool extras. Here's how you can win 'em all.

1 AREA 5, MISSIONS 1 & 2
The Colosseum

Both Colosseum challenges are tricky endurance fights where you're playing for points and the stake doubles each round. You must beat six, and later eight, opponents on a single energy bar. Fortunately you can choose to retire after each win. Attempt to ring-out your opponents early on so you don't take much damage.

2 AREA 6, AREA 7, AREA 13
Shrine of Eurydice, Palgea Shrine, The Adrian and the Fortress

On these missions you can't keep your footing due to either the wind, or a repelling force generated by your opponent. Clearly you must keep running forwards to stay in the ring, but a good tactic is to run to either the left or right of your opponent and try to get a throw in.

3 AREA 8, MISSION 1; AREA 17; AREA 2, MISSION 2; AREA 4
Kunpaetku Shrine, Water Labyrinth, Silk Road Ruins, Maze of the Dead

Three types of mission where you're poisoned. The simplest has you losing life at a steady rate, so time is of the essence. Tag poison rounds mean you pass the poison to your opponent when you hit them, and vice versa. Finally, there's also a variation where you lose life quickly but can regain it with a Soul Charge.

4 AREA 9, MISSION 1
Emperor's Garden

You must land 16 hits on your opponent before they do the same to you. Your first opponent is not too much trouble, but the second one is always Xianghua, who attacks extremely quickly. Make sure your blocking and parrying is up to scratch, and there are no ring-outs, so don't let her trap you in a corner.

5 AREA 14, MISSIONS 1 & 2
City of Water

These are essentially team battle rounds. Your team is a random fighter and then your chosen warrior. The last opponent is always Siegfried, so try to keep at least one character unharmed before you face him. Mission one is two-on-two, mission two is three-on-three.

6 6. AREA 8, MISSION 2
Kunpaetku Shrine

You're fighting on a narrow beam and must knock down five Lizard Men in the allotted time. One hit kills though, and every extra one you beat gives you bonus points. Throws don't work on this stage because it's so narrow, but choose Taki or Hwang and just get kicking. This is a good one to replay if you need extra points.

7 AREA 11, MISSION 2
Takamatsu Castle

You start with just a smidgen of your life bar left, but regain power over time, so back off at the start and wait until you've recovered a bit before attacking. The first two opponents are random, but the third is always Mitsurugi, who can be very dangerous if he gets a good combo in.

8 AREA 10, MISSION 2; AREA 16, MISSION 2
Money Pit, Valentine Mansion

In the first of these battles your opponent is invisible apart from their weapon. In the second, all weapons are invisible. When your opponents are invisible they seem easier to ring out, so this is the tactic to go for. Invisible weapons is harder because it's difficult to judge the range of the attacks.

9 AREA 18, MISSION 2
Chaos

The final mission is a four-on-one endurance bout against super-fast metallic characters. You're also poisoned, but every hit you land gives you some life back. The least difficult way to do this one is to back off to the edge of the stage and go for ring-outs. It might be cheesy, but it's effective.

LIZARDMAN

Somewhat like Sophitia, bizarrely, but slower and more powerful. Picked mainly for comedy value due to his freaky looks and slightly dense demeanour.

FIGHTING BASICS

1 Lizard Man is the freak of *Soul Calibur*. His fighting style is related to that of Sophitia, but he's a lot slower and much more powerful. He also has a fairly wide range of unique moves, including some cool throws and manic combos. If you like slower characters such as Nightmare, then you'll like Lizard Man.

2 Try some of his leaping or variable-height attacks. If you can catch your opponent unawares with a move that attacks at both high and low levels, you can get at least one hit in even if they block the other. Leaping attacks are good too, because they're usually pretty fast.

3 Lizard Man's downside is his speed – or rather lack of it. It's therefore best to keep up a relentless attack so your opponent can't get a move in edgeways. If you're playing against a much faster character, such as Taki, you're almost bound to lose unless you can block and counter well.

SPECIAL MOVES

1 **MEZE REPTILE RUMBLE**
QCB, Y+B
One of Lizard Man's cool unique throws. He climbs up his opponent and then proceeds to repeatedly stamp on their face. Not the most powerful throw in his repertoire, but one of the most amusing.

2 **TWOLNO GATHERING REFRAIN**
Back, X, X, X
This one is good for catching your opponent off guard, because the three parts of the attack hit home at high, low and then mid-level, meaning you can get all three in faster than your adversary can react and block them.

3 **KAMIRA ROMPER FLOAT**
QCF, B, B, X, Y
Timing on this multi-part move is critical. It's important to get the first B press in immediately after the QCF, then follow up quickly with the next two presses. The final Y press should be delayed for half a second or so until the main part of the move is in progress.

SIEGFRIED

Siegfried is another big hitter, and shares most his moves with Nightmare. This means he's awesomely powerful but not too fast, although a little quicker than his source fighter.

FIGHTING BASICS

1 As with most of the other bigger characters, Siegfried suffers from his lack of speed. Take care to connect with your moves, as most take a while to execute and a miss can leave you vulnerable to an annoying counter-attack by a swifter opponent.

2 Although Siegfried is virtually a clone of Nightmare, he does seem to have a slightly shorter range when it comes to throws. This means you must get in closer to do some serious damage, a fact which can catch out experienced Nightmare players if they're not expecting it. As ever, practice, practice, practice.

3 Siegfried has some extra stances where he pauses in a certain position. You then have a choice of moves. A simple example is to hold on a X attack, where you're then in Side Hold stance, and from here you can go into several other moves such as the Double Phantom Slash (X, X).

SPECIAL MOVES

1 **DOUBLE GROUNDER**
X, down, X, X
Timing is critical. You must hit down immediately after the first X press, and you must also leave a slight pause between the second and last presses. If you mess things up, the final hit won't work.

2 **FATAL DIVE**
Back, hold back, Y, Y
An interesting move that gives you several options. Run through it, and Siegfried does a leaping slash then an upwards attack. Hold the first Y press, however, and he pauses in a crouching stance; now hit any of the attack buttons to end the move differently.

3 **SPIN KICK TO SLASH CROSS**
X+B, X, X, Y
A quick combo. The first hit is a step-in kick, so you don't need to worry about being close for this to work. He follows up with two quick horizontal slashes, then an almighty vertical swipe than delivers loads of damage.

SUPER ART FIGHTER

If you want to cut to the chase and unlock all the hidden stuff, we suggest you come over all Lovejoy and buy these bits of art first

002 (30pts) – unlocks CG Portraits 1 collection
003 (30pts) – unlocks Silk Road Ruins stage
005 (30pts) – unlocks Harbour Of Souls stage
006 (30pts) – unlocks CG Portraits 2 collection
010 (30pts) – unlocks Maze Of The Dead stage
014 (50pts) – unlocks Special CG collection
015 (20pts) – unlocks Character Profiles in Museum mode
018 (50pts) – unlocks CG Characters collection
019 (50pts) – unlocks Colosseum stage
021 (50pts) – unlocks Silk Road Ruins in Vs mode
026 (50pts) – unlocks Shrine Of Eurydice stage
027 (50pts) – unlocks Palgea Shrine stage
031 (50pts) – unlocks Kunpaetku Shrine stage
032 (50pts) – unlocks Takamatsu Castle in Vs mode
034 (50pts) – unlocks Emperor's Garden stage
036 (50pts) – unlocks The Adrian And The Fortress stage
037 (50pts) – unlocks the Money Pit stage
039 (50pts) – unlocks Xianghua's third costume
040 (50pts) – unlocks Takamatsu Castle stage
045 (50pts) – unlocks Character Illustration collection
054 (50pts) – unlocks Exhibition Theater in Museum mode
055 (50pts) – unlocks Monochrome Illustration collection
056 (50pts) – unlocks Hoko Temple stage
058 (20pts) – unlocks Sophitia's third outfit
060 (50pts) – unlocks The Adrian And The Fortress in Vs mode
065 (50pts) – unlocks City Of Water stage
068 (50pts) – unlocks evening setting for Proving Grounds
070 (30pts) – unlocks Maxi's third outfit
079 (80pts) – unlocks Maze Of The Dead in Vs mode
081 (80pts) – unlocks Ostrheinsburg Castle stage
082 (80pts) – unlocks Valentine Mansion stage
083 (80pts) – unlocks winter setting for Takamatsu Castle
084 (80pts) – unlocks Water Labyrinth stage
090 (80pts) – unlocks Character Concepts collection
093 (80pts) – unlocks second mission at Harbour Of Souls
094 (30pts) – unlocks Voldo's third costume

▷

EXTRA MOVES

LIZARDMAN

MEZE GRIT DRAFT
Forward, hold forward, X

KAMERA GRIT TEMPERANCE
QCF, X, X

MEZE POWER BLAST
QCF x 2, Y

KAMERA GRIT FLOAT
Up / forward, B, X, Y

MEZE SAND REVENGER
Down / back, Y+B

SIEGFRIED

ARMOR BREAKER
Y, Y, Y

LOCK SPLITTER
Forward, hold forward, Y

EARTH DIVIDE
QCF, Y

STOMPING
QCF, B, B, B, B, B, B

ROCK

TORNADO SPIKE
Forward, hold forward, hold X, Y

GRAVITY AXE
Forward, hold forward, Y

BEAR KICK VORTEX
Down / forward, hold B, hold X

AXE HURRICANE
Down / forward, X+Y

SEUNG MINA

GALE STREAM
X X, Y

WING CROSS
Back, hold back, X, X

CRUSHING LONG BLADE
Up / forward, X+Y

HEAVEN'S WHEEL
Up / forward, Y+B

CERVANTES

ETERNAL CURSE
Down / back, X+Y

SLANT CROSS
Down / forward, X+Y

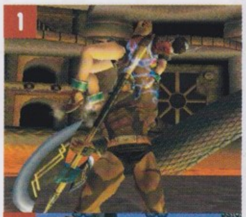
ARMADA ERASER
X+Y, Y

ICEBERG CIRCULAR
Up / back, X+Y

HEAD SCRATCH KICK
Forward, hold forward, B

ROCK

Rock is based on Astaroth, and is more of a clone than most of the hidden characters. Good for a change of scenery only.



FIGHTING BASICS

1 Rock shares Astaroth's huge selection of throws. As well as simply holding guard and then tapping X or Y, you can also then hold down or down/forwards for variations. This last variant throws crouching opponents, which is a handy trick.

2 Most of Rock's basic moves can be delayed by holding the final attack button instead of simply tapping it. This means you can do loads more damage, but because it takes time to charge a delay you run the risk of a counter-attack.

3 If your opponent is just sitting on the guard button, you can use Rock's Guard Crusher: tap Y+B, and he uses his size and reach to club his foe on the back of the head with his axe and break their guard. Follow it up with a rushing move for the best effect.

SPECIAL MOVES

1 **CIRCULAR HEAVEN KICKS**
Forward, hold forward, B, B, B
A fast advancing kick move that's good for ring-outs if your opponent is near the edge of the stage. The instructions say hold forward, but in practice you can let go after the first B press.

2 **HEAVY CRANE**
X+Y, X+Y
A spinning move that can deliver up to seven hits. You need to time the second part right though – wait for about half a second after the first X+Y. You'll know it works, because the background goes dark for a moment as the second part kicks in.

3 **RAPID SPINNING RITUAL**
Back, X+Y, Y, Y
The first Y hit after the X+Y is pretty flexible. Press it early to cut short the initial blade-spinning move, or leave it later to get more hits in at the risk of missing the timing. The final Y press should come as the first hit reaches the top of its swing.

SEUNG MINA

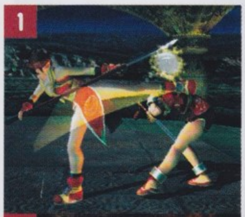
Seung Mina is the last standard hidden character, and has a fighting style based on that of Kilik but slightly faster. One of the better bonus characters available.

FIGHTING BASICS

1 While her moves are based on Kilik's, Seung Mina's extra burst of speed means she feels like a totally different character to play. Use some of the tactics you've perfected with Sophitia and Taki – attack quickly, and back off to avoid taking too much damage.

2 A lot of Seung Mina's more useful moves are based on spins of her bladed staff, and the good ones can deliver up to seven combo hits. This is great because you can keep on battering your opponent and they don't know what's coming next.

3 Seung Mina's main weakness is her lack of reach. If you're playing against a character with a good grab range, or one of the more powerful players like Rock or Nightmare, you could be in for a tough ride. To compensate, try to stay on the offensive.



SPECIAL MOVES

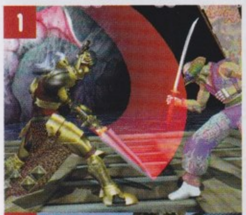
1 **POSEIDON TIDE**
QCB, A
Half throw and half special move, this is a spectacular attack that does loads of damage. Astaroth traps his opponent on the end of his axe, spins them round and launches them into the air.

2 **DEMENTED MOON**
QCF, Y+B
An awesome power-up move that can leave your open to attack but is worth it for the fireworks. Astaroth charges up and then performs a massive golf swing with his axe that's good for causing impressive ring-outs.

3 **TIDAL WAVE**
Back, X+Y
A quick charge up, then a powerful rushing strike. Holding X+Y turns this cool move into the even better Tidal Throw, which is guaranteed to give your opponent a lifetime of back pain. Lovely.

CERVANTES

This is the first hidden character you can win, but after the novelty wears off he's basically the same as Xianghua but with some improvements in the kicking department.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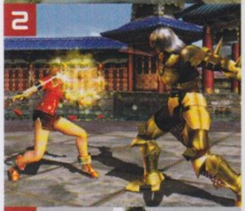
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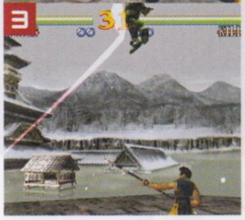
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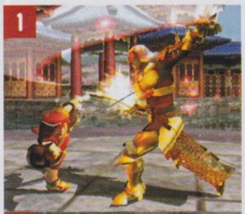
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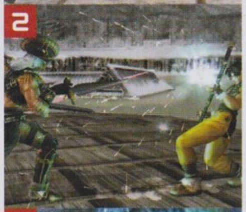
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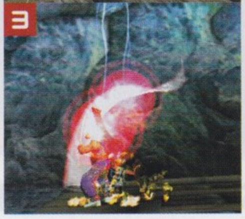
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FIGHTING BASICS

1 Cervantes is a brilliant character for players who like to be evil to their mates, because he's so fast and powerful. His style means that if you're accomplished with Voldo or Sophitia then you can pick up his move easily; everyone else will enjoy his long reach and all-round ferociousness.

2 One thing to remember when playing as Cervantes is to attack, attack, attack. His weak point is if you let the other fighter get the upper hand, especially the larger characters who can keep knocking you down as try to get up. So learn some good combos and get pummelling.

3 Some of Cervantes's most impressive attacks are those where he teleports. The Shadow Flare mentioned below is the most powerful, but you can also knock your opponent high into the air and then teleport up and finish them off. It may be a bit cheesy, but it's cool as heck.

SPECIAL MOVES

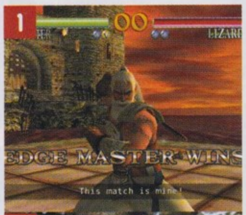
1 **MERCILESS NEEDLE**
X, back, Y, Y
A versatile three-part move. Just doing X and back is powerful enough, but you can also add one or two vertical Y hits for extra damage. Make sure you hit back after X – not at the same time, or this move won't work properly.

2 **FLYING DUTCHMAN**
While crouching, X+Y
This potent attack can deliver up to seven hits if you're close enough to your opponent. Cervantes uses both his swords to stab his opponent repeatedly in the nether regions.

3 **SHADOW FLARE**
Back, Y+B
Cervantes charges up, teleports high into the air and then slams down on his opponent. It's flashy and powerful, but easy to avoid, so only do this one if you're showing off or if you know your opponent isn't going to get up in time. Delivered properly this is a prime-grade evil move.

EDGE MASTER & INFERNO

Inferno and Edge Master both take on the fighting style of a random character each round. If you're good with everyone, you'll have fun playing as them.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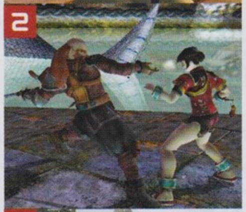
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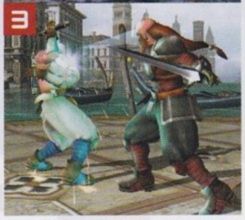
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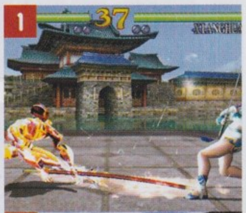
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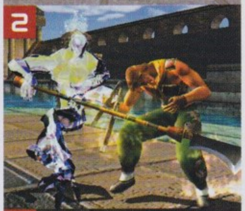
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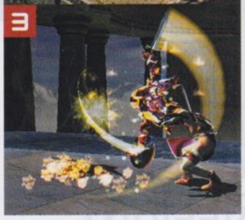
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EDGE MASTER

1 To win Edge Master as a playable character, you first have to complete the game with all 17 standard and hidden characters. The cheeky old chap then appears on the menu screen.

2 You'll probably tire of Edge Master pretty quickly because he doesn't have any moves of his own.However, some amusement can be had when his random fighting style settles on one of the girls, because he even replicates their feminine win poses.

3 In two-player sessions where both of you are equally skilled (or so you reckon), try picking Edge Master for some random action. Because his fighting style changes every round, you're kept on your toes and you're able to see if your mate is as good as he says.

INFERNO

1 To play as Inferno you must earn him. Play mission battle mode until you have enough credits to earn Xianghua's third costume. Select this in arcade mode by choosing her with Y+A, then beat the game to unlock Inferno.

2 Like Edge Master, in each round Inferno takes on a random fighting style from one of the 17 main characters. This means you must be skilled with all of them if you want to do well when you play as him. Perfect excuse for another long Dreamcast session?

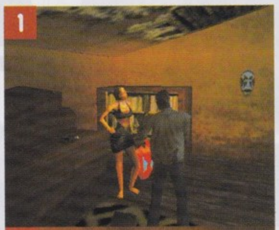
3 Inferno also has some devastating moves of his own. Try Y or B followed quickly by up for some fantastic unblockable attacks. Watch it though, because they go all over the place and can easily ring you out.

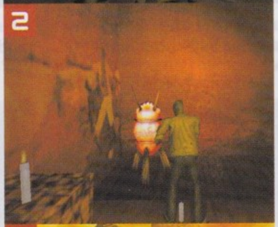
SUPER ART FIGHTER

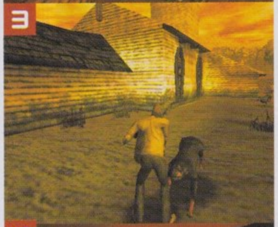
101 (80pts) – unlocks second mission at Silk Road Ruins
103 (80pts) – unlocks Profiles of Warriors 1 collection
104 (80pts) – unlocks 'night' setting for Palgea Shrine stage
106 (80pts) – unlocks second mission in Maze Of The Dead
116 (80pts) – unlocks second mission in Shrine Of Eurydice
117 (80pts) – unlocks second mission in Palgea Shrine
122 (80pts) – unlocks second mission Kunpaetku Shrine
123 (80pts) – unlocks night setting for Silk Road Ruins
126 (80pts) – unlocks Profiles Of Warriors 2 collection
130 (120pts) – unlocks Chaos in Vs mode
132 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in Takamatsu Castle
134 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in Money Pit
137 (120pts) – unlocks Taki in Exhibition Theater
143 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in Emperor's Garden
148 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in The Colosseum
149 (120pts) – unlocks Endings 1 collection
155 (120pts) – unlocks Voldo in Exhibition Theater
159 (120pts) – unlocks Endings 2 collection
167 (120pts) – unlocks Extra Survival mode
169 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in Hoko Temple
177 (50pts) – unlocks Sophitia in Exhibition Theater
178 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in Valentine Mansion
179 (50pts) – unlocks Opening Direction in Museum mode
180 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in The Adrian And The Fortress
182 (120pts) – unlocks second mission in City Of Water
183 (50pts) – unlocks Nightmare in Exhibition Theater
188 (200pts) – unlocks second mission in Water Labyrinth
189 (80pts) – unlocks Astaroth in Exhibition Theater
198 (200pts) – unlocks Hwang in Exhibition Theater
199 (200pts) – unlocks sixth mission in Proving Grounds
203 (200pts) – unlocks Fan Art 1 collection
207 (80pts) – unlocks Yoshimitsu in Exhibition Theater
215 (200pts) – unlocks second mission in Ostrheinsburg Castle
217 (200pts) – unlocks Fan Art 2 collection
224 (80pts) – unlocks Weapon Select feature
225 (80pts) – unlocks Lizard Man in Exhibition Theater
229 (80pts) – unlocks Siegfried in Exhibition Theater

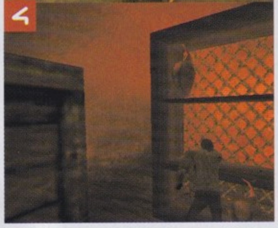
GET TO GRIPS WITH SHADOW MAN

ACCLAIM'S *SHADOW MAN* IS A TOUGH ONE ALRIGHT. AND A BIG TOUGH ONE AT THAT. SO, BEING BRILLIANT AND GREAT AND LOVELY AND CLEVER AND REALLY GOOD AT GAMES AND ALL THAT, WE'VE GOT A BUNCH OF TIPS WHICH WILL SEE YOU RIGHT TO THE END OF THE ADVENTURE









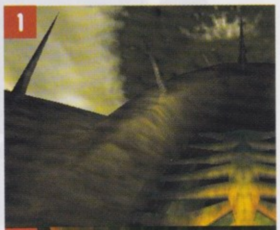
LOUISIANA BAYOU

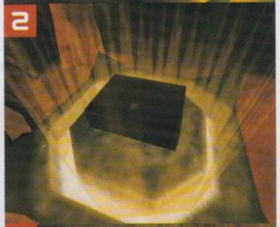
1 Mama Nettie gives you a Shadowgun, but you must make your way across the level to the church you can see on the horizon. Just keep heading for the church. A small cut-scene begins, and Nettie gives you the gun.

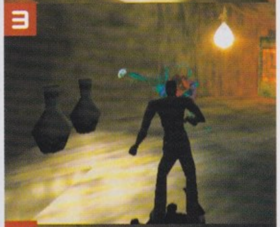
2 Now you have the gun, you can start collecting the dark souls (Govi). The first Govi is in a small cave near the collapsible bridge.

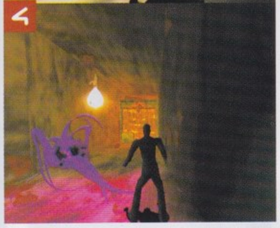
3 You can use the teddy bear to warp to various points you've already been to. From the first Govi, warp to outside Nettie's church and you should see one in the corner.

4 In the area outside the church is a grey slab with some symbols on it. Slam your Calabash on it and you'll find the Govi underneath.









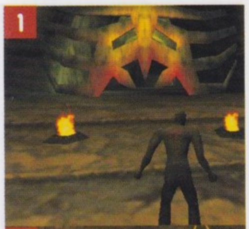
DEADSIDE: MARROW GATES

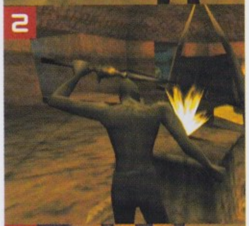
1 To open the Marrow Gates on the deadside you must talk to Jaunty, who lets you get into the deadside. The ribcage swings open and you now have full access to this new world.

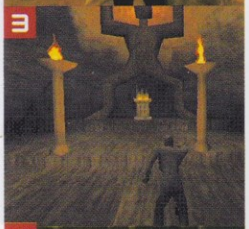
2 After opening the Marrow Gates, go forward to an area with three drums, turn left and you find another area. Continue forward until you get up to a block – use the action button to open it. Enter the room and receive the prophecy from the yellow pedestal in the middle.

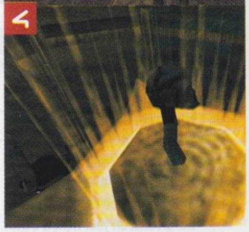
3 In the room containing the Prophecy, you'll see a coffin gate that requires a dark soul. Jump across the bridge nearby and you'll spot a Govi. Shoot it with the upgraded Shadowgun and you'll have unleashed the dark soul.

4 Through the Marrow Gates you can find another large area, this time with a bloodfall in it. Climb the fall – providing you have the Poigne – and you can get the Govi.









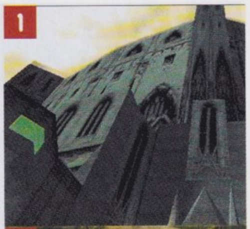
DEADSIDE: WASTELAND

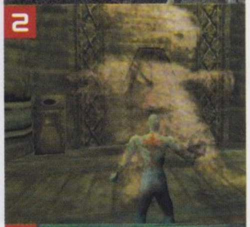
1 To get to the Wasteland you need to enter the Marrow Gates level and head forward. Open the Coffin gates and follow the path until you reach a big bridge. Cross the bridge.

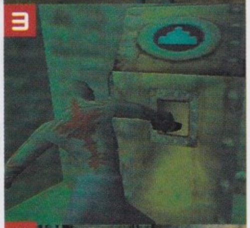
2 After collecting the second dark soul you should jump across the gaps until you reach a broken bridge. Near the bridge is a small ledge – jump up on the ledge and enter the room containing the Asson.

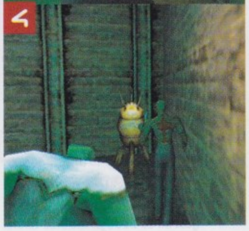
3 To get to the Temple of Life, enter the room with the switch at the bottom. There's a pillar you must jump on to. When you're on the pillar, jump on to a small ledge. From the ledge, walk into the tunnel and you should soon emerge at the temple.

4 After collecting the Asson, continue along the path until you reach a coffin gate, which requires a shadow power of six. Now you can collect the Enseigne; you are practically invincible with this until your magic runs out.









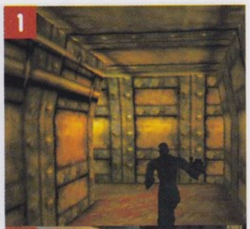
ASYLUM: GATEWAY

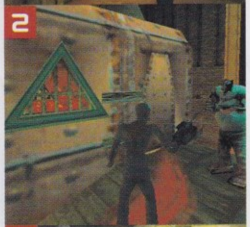
1 To reach the Asylum gateway, start at the bridge which takes you to the Wasteland. Now fall to the side and you find a Coffin gate, which you can open with a shadow power of two. Go over the bridge.

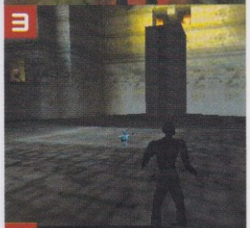
2 Finding the teddy bear icon is important. In the tunnel, cross the metal pipe and follow the path to the area with searchlights. Walk towards the entrance to the asylum to get the teddy bear icon.

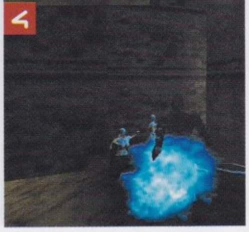
3 The engineer's key enables you to open all sorts of doors and objects. To collect it, enter the yellow tunnel at the start of the asylum and follow the path to a room with an alcove. Jump into it, then fall into the hole on your right-hand side. The key is on a table.

4 To collect the first dark soul from this level, jump off the bridge outside the asylum and land on the pipe below. Follow the path and jump on the moving platform. At the end, jump into the tunnel and follow the long path. You should now be at a brick room – go in and the dark soul is yours.









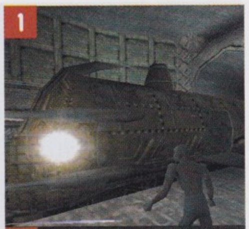
ASYLUM: CATHEDRAL OF PAIN

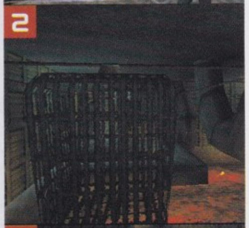
1 Getting to the Cathedral of Pain is pretty simple. Start out at the asylum gateway and unlock the door using the engineer's key, and run forward killing the enemies. In the yellow hallways you can find a red cable car, which takes you to the beginning of this small level.

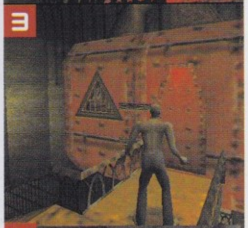
2 To reach the Fire Temple, go to the asylum's main entrance. Go to the lower coffin gate – it needs a shadow power of only three. Now jump down a vertical shaft and cross the large bridge.

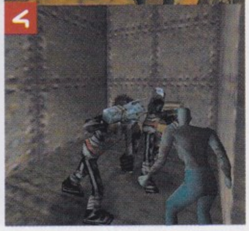
3 Again, from the start, dive into the river of blood and swim through the tunnel to a tall room. To get to the next area, switch on each of the six switches – this should cause a pyramid-shaped staircase to emerge from the ground.

4 The Flamebeau is a powerful weapon that uses magic. To collect this, go into the bloody mess and into one of the long passageways. In this area you can find a coffin gate, which you can break if you have a shadow power of five. Now you can collect the Flamebeau.









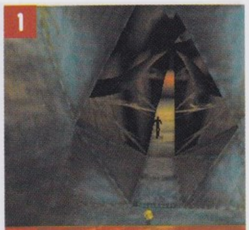
ASYLUM: CAGEWAYS

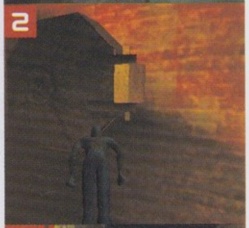
1 To get to the train at the asylum cageways, jump over the platforms at the entrance and head into the cave. Grab the fence and shuffle to the right; climb and jump over the fence, kill the two zombies and climb across the rope. The train is in front of you.

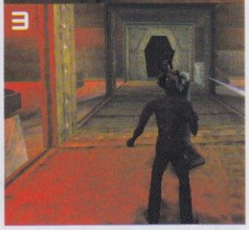
2 At the second cageways, go down the metal pipes at the start of the level and go around the other side. A door at the end of the pipe leads to a big chamber. Run to the other side, dodging the metal cages, and the dark soul is yours.

3 The retractor helps you get on in later levels. At the start of the second cageways turn right before the cable car. Jump at the wall on to a hidden ledge. Jump over the slime, then go past the computers and downstairs. Use your engineer's key on both consoles. The retractor is in this room.

4 The last dark soul is near the first console you stuck your engineer's key into. Turn 180 degrees. Go through the door near the pipe. The Govi is in a floating cage.







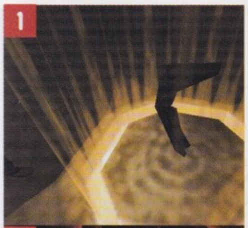
ASYLUM: PLAYROOMS

1 The gruesome asylum playrooms can be entered using the coffin gate at the start of the first asylum cageways. The next room holds a vital part to the L'eclipser. Cross the bridge near the coffin gate to enter the level.

2 To find the teddy bear icon, drop into the bloody water and swim to your right. Avoiding the fish, enter the cave and jump over the easy platforms. You eventually see the console, which requires the engineer's key. Swim through the long tunnel and you're finally on dry land. Sprint through the glass tunnel, and everyone's favourite old bear pops up on the screen.

3 To get the violator, start from the teddy bear icon, run forward and turn right. Enter the door on your left then go into the cupboard door in the hallway (left-hand side). Quickly collect the dark soul and then use your accumulator to open the glass cases – the violator is in the centre one.

4 You're now looking for one of the last Govis on the level, so don't get impatient. Warp to the teddy bear icon, run forward, turn right, go forwards and enter the door. Hit the switch on the console. The rest of this level involves walking on lava, so come back after you've got the Marcher gads. Now you've got into the tub of lava on the side, go down into the passage. When you fall in the white room, the Govi is in front of you.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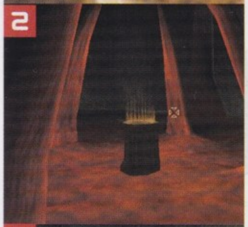
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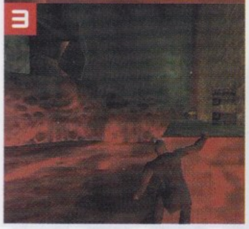
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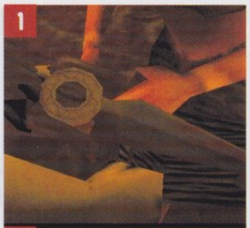
TEMPLE OF PROPHECY

1 Once you're inside the Temple of Prophecy, your main aim is to collect the Marcher gads which enable you to walk on lava. From the teddy bear icon, go into the temple until you find the chamber with the Ancient Sisters. Continue forward, and turn right after you pass a statue in the centre of a room. You end up in a huge room with fire-spitting heads. Dodge your way through this room to the door on the other side.

2 In this room you must grab the rope, land on the wooden platform and go into the next door. Enter the chamber with a large statue situated in the middle, go through the door on your right, go forward and turn right again and push the lava block out of the way. Continue ahead until you reach a maze. Find a way of climbing up to get to the exit, step into the igloo-shaped room, run and jump into the metal ring and you now have the Marcher Gads.

3 The seventh dark soul is quite tough to get. When you're in a huge chamber with lots of Ancient Sisters, a bloodfall and two doors, you must first spot the Govi (which is on a platform). Flick all four switches to lower the obstacles, then take out the sisters. Climb up the bloodfall and jump at the wall facing the Govi. While hanging from the small ledge, shuffle to your right and jump back onto the platform. Run towards the Govi, jump, and you have it.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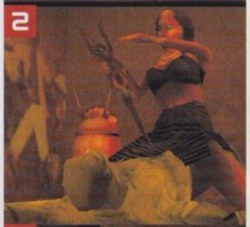
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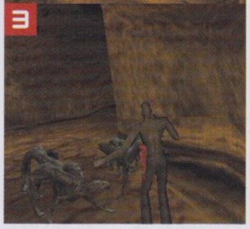
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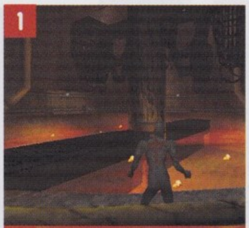
ASSEMBLIN: THE L'ECLIPSER

1 Collecting all the pieces of the L'eclipser enables you to become Shadow Man in the Liveside. The first piece can be found in the Prophecy Chamber. Go through the coffin gate. Now, instead of going into Wasteland, you should fall off the side of the bridge and go through the second coffin gate. Once you're through you can find another two coffin gates. The one on the edge is the one you need; inside is the first piece of the L'eclipser (La Lune).

2 The second piece is through the same first coffin gate you went through to get the first piece. You arrive at a place with a lava pit and a couple of coffin gates – this is the way to the Fire Temple. If you open the coffin gate, which needs a shadow power of five, you then get the second piece (La Soleil).

Finding the third piece (La Lame) starts off where you got La Soleil. Go forward and unlock the coffin gate that requires a shadow power of six. Follow the path to the magma area and you see the entrance to the Temple of Prophecy. Beyond this is a path that leads to a coffin gate. To open it you need a shadow power of seven.

3 Now you have all three pieces you must go back to the Louisiana Swampland and talk to Nettie. Nettie performs the ritual on you, and you now become Shadow Man in both the Liveside and the Deadside.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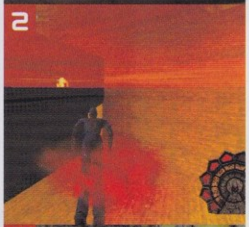
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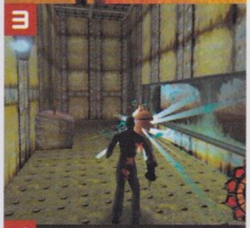
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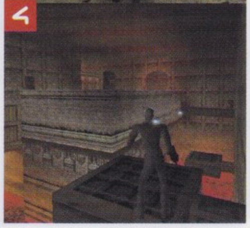
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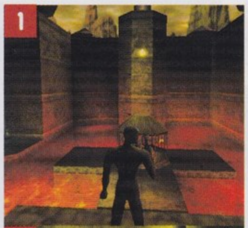
ASYLUM: LAVA DUCTS

1 To get to the teddy bear icon, walk forwards from the start of the level and climb the platforms. Continue forward until you get to a massive room with a large piece of machinery in the middle. This is where you can now warp back to.

2 There's a dark soul near your warp point. Go to the area where there's a cage around the stairs that go down, and carry on going forwards to a steep area with platforms. Climb to the top, and run in the opposite direction to that of the turning blades. At the end, look down to see a Govi.

3 From where the teddy bear icon was, swim through another acid tunnel to an area with lots of consoles. Use the engineer's key on each of these. Continue down the stairs to find a second acid room. Run alongside the acid to find the Govi.

4 At the start of the level, go left into the magma-filled room. There are two vents in the wall here (coloured white). Jump into them to find the final Govi on this stage.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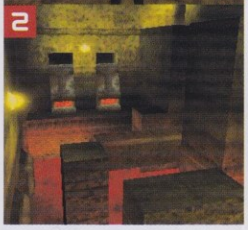
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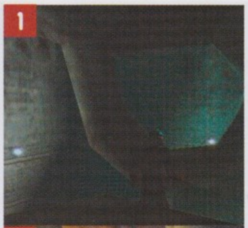
TEMPLE OF BLOOD

1 To collect the Calabash in the Temple of Blood, start from the teddy bear icon and jump to the platforms on your right until you're flat against the wall. Pull yourself up and follow the hallway to the first acid room. Jump up to the platform, and keep jumping gaps until you find a tunnel.

Once you're in, activate the two wooden switches. The heads on the stage now go down, and the Ancient Sisters are very angry. After you've fought them, you can't go back up to the top so you must go back to the warp point and return to the area you were just in. Go through the blue tunnel and enter the coffin gate (which requires a shadow power of nine) to get the Calabash.

The Nager Gads enable you to swim in lava and acid, so these are a must-have. From the warp point, jump to the platforms on your right until you're against the wall, then jump up and grab the ledge. Follow the corridor and jump up onto the moving platforms. At the top, keep jumping gaps until you see heads below you going in and out of the wall. Jump in-between them, then down to the island and activate the switch, then across the platforms. Jump in between the next set of faces and jump to the exit door.

2 You're now in the second acid room. Leap to the island on your right and hang from the ledge above. then slowly make your way to the left. At the end, avoid the statue faces and jump to the exit. In the third acid room you must run forwards until you reach a wooden switch, press it to extend the rope. Grab the rope and head towards the exit. In the next room you must activate the switches in the corner and then make your way to the middle after activating the last switch. You now have the Nager Gads.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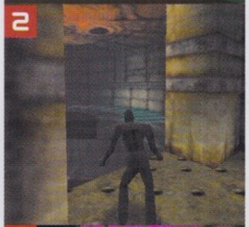
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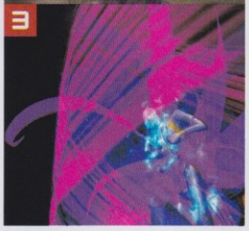
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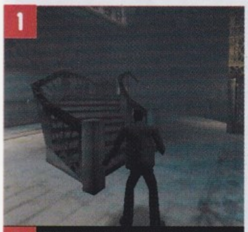
ASYLUM: UNDERCITY

1 At the undercity in the asylum, it's vital to get the teddy bear icon (you can find it if you carry on forwards at the start of the level). Now for a hard-to-find Govi. Go forward and you can see a pipe in the ground. On your right is a door. Hop up and climb the rocks. In front of you is a ledge next to a pipe – jump on this then go through the door. At the stairs, kill the Mummyguns and then use the engineer's key in the console.

Climb on to the computers and keep jumping higher. Eventually you can use one of the propellers to take you to the other door. Jump into the tunnel, and at the end you find some still propellers – turn them on below by using the engineer's key. Now jump up until you get to a thin hole in the wall. Enter here and the Govi is yours.

2 To collect the retractor before you finish this level, you must continue from the second propeller room and make your way to the lowest propeller. In the wall you can find a tunnel. Follow the path, then turn left. Carry on following the path and then go downstairs and collect the last retractor in the game.

3 To get the last Govi, follow the same route as above, but at the end turn right instead of left. Turn on the console with the engineer's key and a pair of blades will stop revolving in the following room. Fall down the vertical shaft in front of you and go through the hallway. You now have the last Govi.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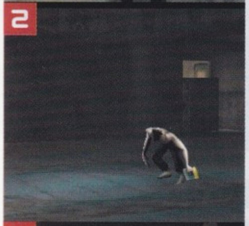
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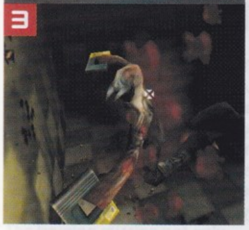
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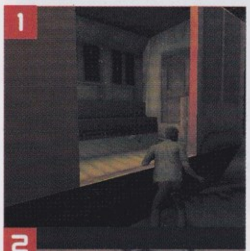
MORDANT STREET:
NEW YORK

1 New York is the setting, and you must reach the first boss, the Home Improvement Killer. In the large room with broken steps, run through the nearby doors and make your way upwards until you find a generator. Turn the machine on and you can now see where you're going! Now go back to the large room with broken steps.

There's a large illuminated pillar in the room – touch the gate to open it. Run inside and press 'A' to make the lift go up. When you reach the top, go right and jump over the gap in the floor. Go left and follow the path forwards, shooting any planks or crates that get in your way. You should soon find an accumulator. Carry on to a hallway with a bloodfall in it. Climb up it and you should soon be in front of the Home Improvement Killer.

2 To beat the Home Improvement Killer, use your double machine-gun and shoot like crazy. If your energy gets low, use the Enseigne to block. After you've caused major damage to him, he walks off. Go back to the bloody river, and when the music stops go back to the room you were just in. Kill his beast transformation, and finish him off with the Shadowgun.

3 To get to the Soul Gate, after beating the boss continue walking until you come across a large gate with an altar in front of it. Use the prism to open the gate.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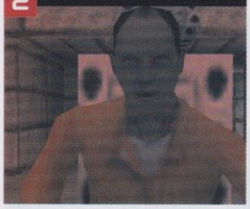
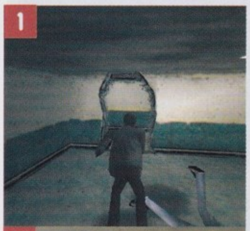

2

DOWN STREET STATION:
LONDON

1 To get to Jack the Ripper, continue from the schism and go through the door and down the stairs. Turn left, follow the tunnel, turn right and jump into the alcove. Follow the new tunnel, then dive into the green water and swim through to the next entrance. In the next chamber, swim up and surface. Get the life moving and then get out.

2 You find three large propellers coming out of the water. Swim across and you reach Jack the Ripper's chamber. Beat Jack by using the double machine-guns, block with the Enseigne, and when he collapses shoot him with the Shadowgun to finish him off.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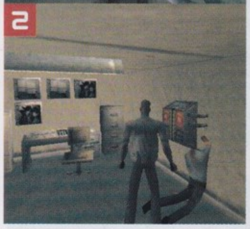
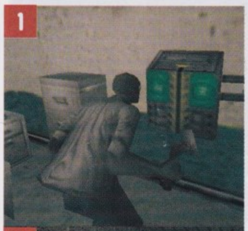

2

GARDELLE JAIL:
TEXAS (PART 1)

1 To collect the key card in the Texas jail you must make your way to the first big room (which just involves walking forward from the schism) and enter the room under the staircase.

2 Through the hole in the wall you can hear a lot of shouting and sirens. Walk to the far end and enter the police lookout point. There's a man slumped against the wall, and in his hand is the key card.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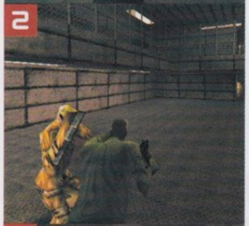
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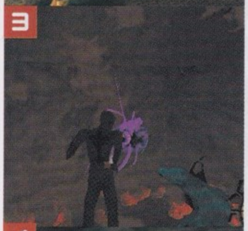
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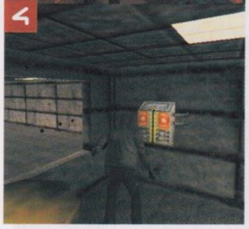
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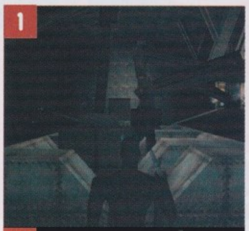
GARDELLE JAIL:
TEXAS (PART 2)

1 Now you have the key card. Around various parts of the level are small consoles with red lights on them. When used with the card, these unlock various cell doors.

2 When you get to the insanity ward you must find Dr Batrachian (The Lizard King). You find him after opening several gates by using the key card. Beat him in the same way as the other bosses.

3 There are three extra dark souls in this level. The first is from Marco Cruz (Repo Man), the second is from Milto Pike (Video Nasty Killer), and the third from Dr Batrachian (Lizard King).

4 Finding the Soul Gate is a doddle – it's in the same room that you fought the Lizard man. The first accumulator is near the Video Nasty Killer, the second is in the Insanity Ward, and the third is via the Lizard King schism which you get to be running forward, then left, and blasting open the lock on the door.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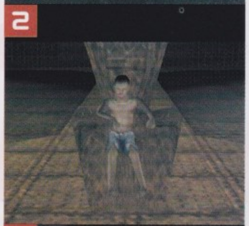
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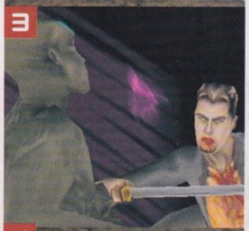
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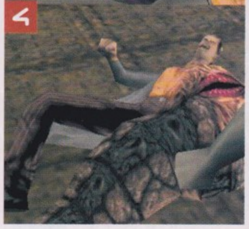

4

ASYLUM: ENGINE BLOCK

1 At the asylum engine block you must shut down the four pistons. When you find the rooms which enable you to shut them down, you notice a few things. The main one is a gold plate on the wall indicating the piston number (which is above the engineer's key console). The number combinations for the pistons are (in corresponding order): 5-5-5, 1-2-4, 3-1-2, 2-4-5. You can now begin your final adventure.

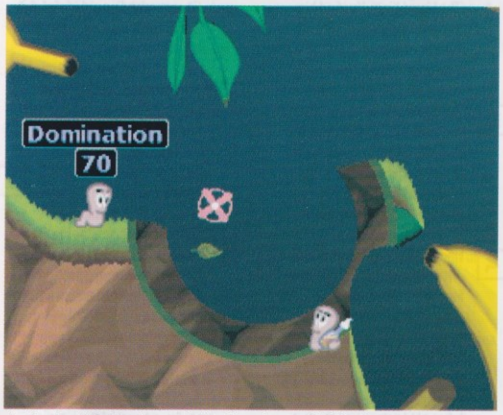
2 After shutting down all four pistons you can make your way to the other side and find your brother Luke. Chase him into the massive room and prepare to fight Legion.

3 To beat Legion, fire the Violator and Shadowgun at him until he dies. You must keep shooting both, but the Shadowgun is how you get to steal his soul.

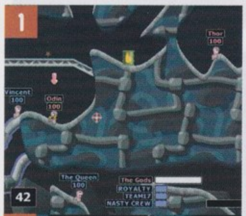
4 Legion is only vulnerable for a short period of time, so you must be quick. When he's dead, sit back and watch one of the most unrewarding endings of all time.

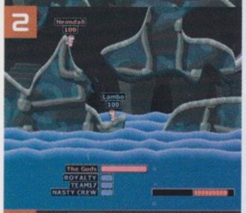
GET TO GRIPS WITH WORMS ARMAGEDDON

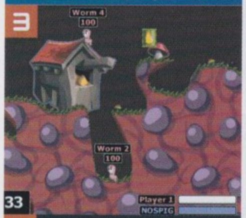
BLAST YOUR WAY TO VICTORY IN THIS HILARIOUS OUTING WITH THE WORMS. USE THE RANGE OF AVAILABLE WEAPONS TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, EMPLOY EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES AND, ABOVE ALL, SHOW NO MERCY!

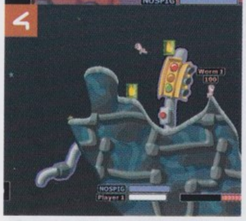

Domination
70

△ They're pink, they're small, they're cute… so kill the buggers.


1
Thor 100
Vincent 100
Odin 100
The Queen 100
The Gods
ROYALTY
TEAM17
NASTY CREW
42


2
Heimdall
Lambo 100
The Gods
ROYALTY
TEAM17
NASTY CREW


3
Worm 4 100
Worm 2 100
33
Player 1
NOSPIG


4
Worm 1 100
NOSPIG
Player 1

BASIC TIPS

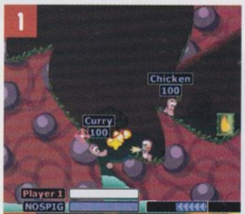
As with many things, getting the basics – the groundwork, if you like – sorted is imperative before you move on to any trickier stuff. You don't try to run before you can walk, do you? So take it from the top with first things first.

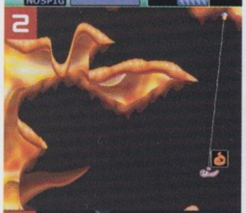
1 When the match starts, look around the level using the analog stick to get a rough idea of where all your opposition's worms are. Also check whether any of your worms are in danger of falling off the edge if shot.

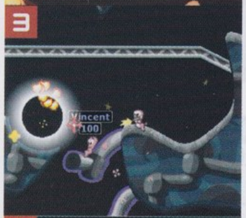
2 When you get your first go, try to take advantage of any vulnerable opponents – they may well be positioned in groups or on cliff edges. If you play these advantages well you could wipe out half the other team before they get a go.

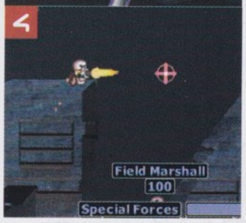
3 Try to quickly move your worms away from hazards. However, try not to hide them away where they can't attack either. When you begin to run out of ranged weapons you'll regret being too cautious.

4 To get the perfect shot, you must first position your worms effectively. The back flip (double-tap B) gets you to higher platforms.


1
Chicken 100
Curry 100
Player 1
NOSPIG




3
Vincent 100


4
Field Marshall
100
Special Forces

GUNS

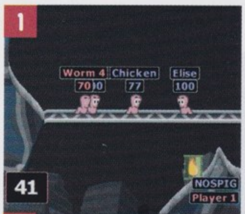
The handguns may not cause as much damage as the artillery weapons you have at your disposal, but they're vital for close-quarters fighting and can be used to give an enemy that little push they need to knock them over a cliff.

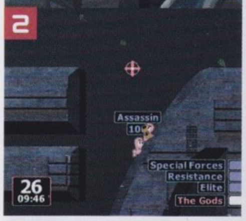
1 The shotgun enables you to take two shots, each with a potential damage of 25 hit points. It's best used gun is for pushing enemy worms into mines and off the landscape altogether.

2 The second use for the shotgun is to use one shot to cut through some scenery, then move in to use your other shot to kill a nearby worm. Also try aiming down on to an enemy to cut through bridges and send them into the drink.

3 The Uzi fires a stream of bullets capable of doing 50 hit points of damage. It can be used to cut through walls and damage hiding opponents, and to push enemy worms towards their doom.

4 The mini-gun has the same properties as the Uzi, but has a far better range and can do 100 hit points of damage. Try to save this weapon for worms with a lot of energy, or ones on a cliff edge.


1
Worm 4 70
Chicken 77
Elise 100
41
NOSPIG
Player 1


2
Assassin
Special Forces
Resistance
Elite
The Gods
26
09:46

PLAYING AGAINST THE COMPUTER

The computer AI in *Worms Armageddon* is very high. It makes impossible shots with grenades, and manages to use the wind to curve bazooka shells round bends. However, exploit its weaknesses and you'll win every time.

1 The computer doesn't normally endanger one of its own worms. If you can position one of your characters on top of or very near an enemy worm, then the rest of the computer's team won't fire at you in case they hit their team-mate.

2 When playing mission mode, the computer is limited by the weapons it has and the turn order. If the computer has no close-range weapons, you can position yourself close enough to the enemy so that it can't attack at all.

BASIC TRAINING

The training mission not only enables you to perfect your skills, but is also vital for the successful completion of mission mode. To play a mission, you need a bronze medal in basic training; to play past level 11 you need a silver; level 23 a gold.

1 Grenade skills. One-second fuses for grade 1 + 2 except the third, which needs a 3 at 20 degrees. Grade 3, first two targets use one-second fuses. For the third, a three-second at 40 degrees. Four-second at close to 80 degrees for fourth. Use a one-second for the last.

2 Bazooka skills. Try to use the wind to your advantage. A low-power shot straight up and against the wind will hit behind you, while a powered-up shot will skim along the water.

3 Rope skills. For grade 1, swing to the crate and hit the target. For grade 2, go left to dynamite, then use X while on the rope to drop it on the target, and swing away back to a higher platform or you'll fall when it explodes.

1
23
The Gods
Probe

USING THE NINJA ROPE

The ninja rope is perhaps the most useful item you have in your inventory. Learn to utilise this to its full potential and you're able to zip around the level before attacking your unsuspecting foe.

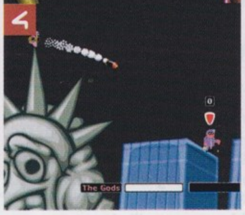
1 To get above something, it's easier to attach your rope to a higher object and pull your worm up. However, if you can't do this, attach it to something nearby and swing until you're upside down, then extend to get over the obstacle.

2 It's important to learn how to swing across the ceilings in this game. Swing then press A to release the rope, and A again to re-attach it. To get the most out of your swing, leave as long as possible before re-attaching.

3 To reach the ceiling, fire your rope into something higher than you and then bounce until you get momentum. Release the rope, then fire it again when you get high to reach the ceiling.

1
26
The Gods

2
15
The Gods



ADVANCED TRAINING MISSIONS

The handguns may not cause as much damage as the artillery weapons, but they're vital for close-quarters fighting and to give an enemy a little push over a cliff.

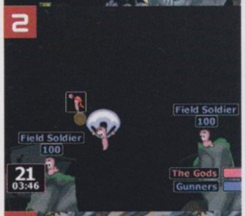
1 Super Sheep Racing enables you to get to grips with one of the most effective weapons in the game – the super sheep. Try to stay close to the ground to save time. If the crate appears at the far end, lose your sheep to save time.

2 Rifle Range has you destroying targets from a distance using the shotgun. Avoid moving more than you have to or you'll have further to go if another target appears behind you. Also, try hitting them while they're airborne.

3 Crazy Crates is a mad scenario where you must swing around to collect crates. Take your time when swinging, because if you to pick up crates mid-swing you save time, and falling costs valuable seconds.

4 In Euthanasia, it's best to use the bazooka to waste the grannies. Use your homing missiles to silence the old biddies that appear at the far ends.

1
Winger
100
Odin
100
25
The Gods
Towel



3
Heimdall
100

4
Vincent
100
The Gods
ROYALTY
TEAM17
NASTY CREW
7

GETTING AROUND THE LEVEL

The ninja rope isn't the only way of getting get around. Items such as the blowtorch can get you through barriers, while the bungee can guarantee soft landings.

1 Digging tunnels can offer you shelter from an opponent's attacks and enable you to use air strikes freely. However, you can also use the blowtorch to cause damage by cutting through an opponent.

2 Use the bungee and parachute to fall off high ledges safely without loosing your go. You can drop a weapon while parachuting down, but remember that the wind affects where you land.

3 The Teleporter is very useful for getting to hard-to-reach platforms, but it leaves you open to attacks. It's best to use this to get away from rising water levels or to position a worm out of enemy range.

4 The jetpack should be saved until it can be utilised fully. You can use it to place an item such as a banana bomb next to an enemy worm and then simply fly away, leaving them to die.

SHORT & SWEET

MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

ACCESS CHEAT MENU

At the start screen press up, up, down, down, left, left, right, right. You'll hear a laugh – now enter the options screen, press L+R and cheat away.

NFL BLITZ 2000

ACCESS HIDDEN PLAYERS

To access some wacky hidden players in this great game, enter one of the following names and the pin 1111 at the Enter Names For Record Keeping screen: Alien, Aob, Brain, Curtis, Dino, Forden, Gentil, Jeff, Moose, Pirate, Ralph, Sad, Skull, Smile, Thug, Trex.

READY 2 RUMBLE

UNLOCK BRONZE-CLASS BOXERS

Enter your gym name as Rumble Power.

UNLOCK SILVER-CLASS BOXERS

Enter you gym name as Rumble Bumble.

UNLOCK GOLD CLASS BOXERS

Enter your gym name as Mosma!

UNLOCK CHAMPIONSHIP-CLASS BOXERS

Enter your gym name as Pod 5!

SOUL FIGHTER

ACCESS CHEAT CODES SCREEN

When the *Soul Fighter* logo appears, press left on the D-pad and Y. Go to the options menu and exit it to reach the cheat code screen.

HIGH ENERGY

On the cheats screen, enter the code ABXXYA to boost your energy and whip some tail.

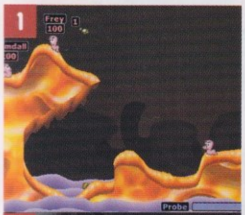
TOY COMMANDER

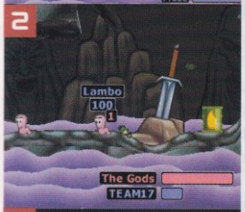
ACCESS ALL ROOMS

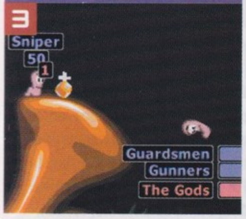
Pause the game and hold L, then press A,Y,X,B,Y,X. You should hear a tone.

POWER UP YOUR GUNS

Pause, hold L and press B,A,Y,X,A,B to activate this cheat.


1
Frey
100
Heimdall
100
Probe

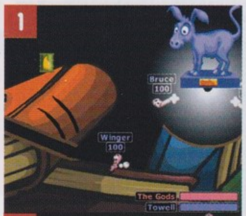

2
Lambo
100
The Gods
TEAM17

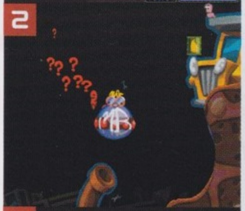

3
Sniper
50
Guardsmen
Gunners
The Gods

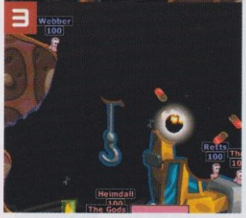
GRENADES

Grenades are the computer's weapon of choice in *Worms Armageddon*, and can be extremely effective if the right fuse is used. In the weapons menu, hold TL and press X to change the timer, and A to change the bounce.

1. Use a one-second fuse to hit close enemy worms. The two- and three-second fuses are useful for distances and dropping down holes, while the four- and five-second fuses are only really useful for high shots.
2. The grenade is capable of doing 50HP damage and can be used in the same manner as dynamite. Set the grenade to a five-second fuse, place it next to a worm, then run away leaving them to explode.
3. There are several special grenades in this game. The banana bomb explodes and releases lots of small explosive bananas, while the holy hand grenade can do 100HP damage. Use them as you would a normal grenade, but use a standard grenade to line up your shot first so you don't miss and waste them.


1
Bruce
100
Winger
100
The Gods
Towell

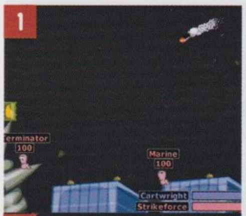


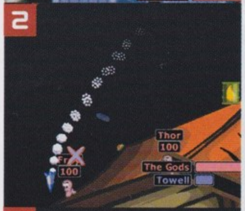

3
Webber
100
Retts
100
Heimdall
100
The Gods

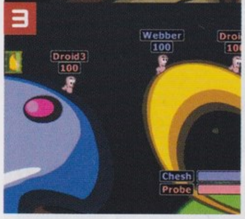
AIR STRIKES

As we've all seen in modern warfare, air strikes are perhaps the easiest way to hit an opponent, as long as they're not underground. Simply click the arrow on them – even if you're underground – and they're history.

1. The standard air strike comes straight down over the target and blows up an area a couple of inches wide. Variations such as the dreaded Donkey do more damage but have the same blast radius.
2. Some of the special air strikes, such as the Mail Strike and MB Bomb, are affected by the wind. Remember that although a direct hit does more damage, an explosion next to a foe can blow them off the cliff edge.
3. Make sure that your worms are out of the way before using air strikes – unless you're willing to sacrifice them. The Carpet Bomb and Mine Strike bounce randomly, so they're unpredictable.


1
Terminator
100
Marine
100
Cartwright
Strikeforce

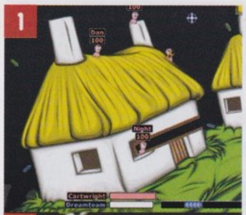

2
Thor
100
The Gods
Towell

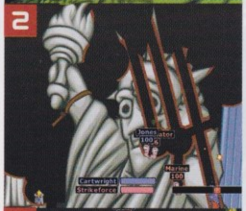

3
Droid3
100
Webber
100
Chesh
Probe

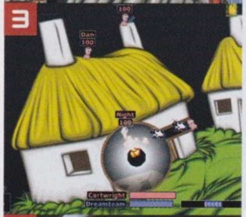
MISSILES

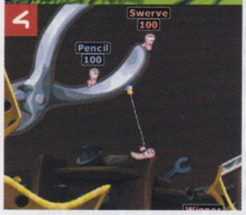
The bazooka is one of the most useful weapons in your arsenal, and is often the determining factor in a heated battle. Being able to hit an opponent from a distance with this weapon will almost double your success rating.

1. The key to mastering the bazooka is learning how to use the wind. Try to aim as high as possible and power-up your shot, then simply experiment to see where the wind takes it.
2. The Homing Missile isn't affected by wind. Simply select your target and then fire the rocket. Try aiming the missile to one side of a worm to push it off a cliff, and always fire at an upwards angle to avoid hitting scenery.
3. The mortar is unaffected by the wind and doesn't need to be charged. The initial blast does little damage. Try aiming above an enemy so the clusters rain down on them, doing up to 100HP of damage.


1
Dan
100
Night
100
Cartwright
Dreamteam


2
Jones
Marine
100
Cartwright
Strikeforce

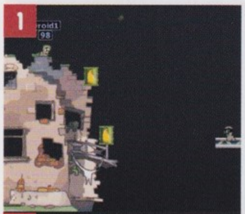

3
Dan
100
Night
Cartwright
Dreamteam

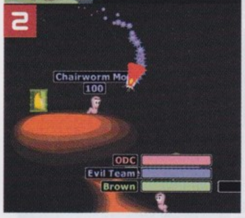

4
Swerve
100
Pencil
100
Winger

ADVANCED TACTICS

The deathmatch mode is ideal for honing your skills. To survive some of the later levels you really must be a very competent player. Stick with these tactics and you'll be unstoppable.

1. It's sometimes best to have one worm dig a hole and hide in it, while the rest of your team remain on the surface fighting. The worm in the hole should then emerge, attack, and run back to the shelter.
2. If one or more of your opponent's worms is dug in (as described above), there are a few techniques you can use to get rid of them. Weapons such as the Mole Bomb open up their shelters, and sheep and skunks make them sorry they were born.
3. Old women, mad cows and the Sally Army run down tunnels and destroy your foe. However, placing a mine at the entrance is just as effective. This blocks their escape route and prevents that worm from attacking.
4. Once you're good enough with utilities such as the ninja rope, try hit-and-run tactics – swing across a level, drop a bomb and swing back to safety.




2
Chairworm Mo
100
ODC
Evil Team
Brown

SPECIAL WEAPONS

Some special items in this game can be lethal if used properly. These are rare, but they do appear more frequently in the schemes you're awarded for finishing certain levels.

1. The nuke is absolutely lethal. Not only does it poison all living worms, causing them to loose 5HP a round, it also raises the water level to nearly half the height of the screen, drowning any worms below that level. Get as high as you can before activating this weapon.
2. The Super Sheep is a fantastic weapon. Launch your sheep using A, and direct it with the D-pad. Crash into your target to cause maximum damage. Learn to use this weapon properly and you can hit almost any worm. The Aquasheep can even fly underwater.

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- Puyo Puyo
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- Ready to Rumble Boxing
- ReVolt
- Rippin Riders
- Sega Bass Fishing
- Sega Rally 2
- Seventh Cross
- Shadow Man
- Shotuko Highway Battle
- Sonic Adventure
- Soul Calibur
- South Park
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- Trickstyle
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dial A game

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16

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ZOMBIE REVENGE
0906 2250002

READY 2 RUMBLE
0906 2250003

SONIC ADVENTURE
0906 2250004

VIRTUAL STRIKER 2000
0906 2250005

DEADLY SKIES	0906 2250006
RE-VOLT	0906 2250007
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB	0906 2250008
SEGA RALLY 2	0906 2250009
TOY COMMANDER	0906 2250010
BUGGY HEAT	0906 2250011
INCOMING	0906 2250012
DYNAMITE COP 2	0906 2250013
TRICKSTYLE	0906 2250014
HYDRO THUNDER	0906 2250015
PEN PEN	0906 2250016
UEFA STRIKER	0906 2250017
AEROWINGS	0906 2250018
NFL BLITZ	0906 2250019
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Calls cost 60p per minute. The maximum cost of call £3. Ask permission of the person paying the bill.

Calls cost £1.00 per minute. The maximum cost of call for products is as follows: All software £39. Joypad, VMU Unit and Force Pack £22. S-AV Cable, Scart Lead and Dream Cable £15. Wheel & Pedals £42. Make sure you have the permission of the person paying the bill. Delivery within three days subject to stock. For technical & delivery enquiries call 0113 3830420. Game 24/7 PO Box 293, Leeds LS2 7AG.

Dreamcast

IN THE HOT SEAT
WITH SEGA

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CALL SEGA

Sega have set up three phone line services to cover all your Dreamcast queries:

CONSUMER SERVICE LINE
08456 090090
Call this number if you have a technical problem with your console, or questions about when and where you can buy products.
Cost: local call rates.

INTERNET SUPPORT LINE
09066 544544
For questions about DC's online facilities, including the Dreamkey software and connection problems.
Cost: 60p per minute.

HINTS & TIPS LINE
09067 532222
Hints, tips and solutions for any of Sega's Dreamcast titles.
Cost: 75p per minute.

If you're under 18, ask permission from whoever pays the phone bill before calling, or you'll be for it.

ON THE BUTTON

Is there a button on the keyboard – the real one – that replicates the function of the start button?

Ian Ward, via email

Not really. The keyboard is design to be used in conjunction with the control pad.

KEY QUESTION

How are you planning to distribute new versions of Dreamkey? Will we have to pay for them?

Ian Roberts, via email

Plans are being drawn up now for distribution of Dreamkey 2. Details will appear in the mag as soon as they're decided, and rest assured that the upgrade will be free.

WHAT'S THE WORD?

Will Dreamcast ever have a word processing package? If so will it be Microsoft Word?

Mark Malekpour, via email

There are no plans for a word processing package yet. It wouldn't really be worthwhile unless a printer and hard drive were available. Maybe later in Dreamcast's life.

A FAIR COP

Will there ever be a *Virtua Cop* game on Dreamcast? If not, what other gun games are coming out?

Kev, via email

No plans for *Virtua Cop* at the moment, but some third parties are looking at shooting games for this year.

BALLS

What football games have Sega got planned for the year 2000? I know about *Virtua Striker 2000*, but I'd like an in-depth league simulation. And don't tell me to buy *Worldwide Soccer*.

Daniel Gordon, Leicester

A greatly improved version of *Worldwide Soccer* will be in the shops in the first quarter of 2000, and there are at least two more footie games coming from Sega this year.

NIGHT TIME

Is there going to be a *Nights* game coming out on Dreamcast?

Patrick Bate, via email

Probably not. The *Sonic* team are busy working on games like *Chu Chu Rocket* and a couple of other winners.

WHERE'S SONIC?

What is the URL address for the Sonic homepage, and how can I download the Sonic DMX course?

Chris Carter [no, not that Chris Carter], via email

You don't need to use the URL. Put *Sonic Adventure* in your Dreamcast and go to the Internet option on the game menu. This accesses the homepage for all the *Sonic* network features. While you're there, check out the Chao online doctor and daycare centre!

DRIVE TIME

When will the DVD add-on come out, and how much will it cost?

Everyone, via email

Dreamcast is one of the most flexible games platforms ever made. Once there's a real market demand for DVD via Dreamcast, we'll be able to develop a drive very quickly and easily.

SCART ATTACK

I'd like to know if there's a compatibility problem with the Dreamcast SCART cable and widescreen TVs. I have a Toshiba 28-inch widescreen, and all the cables that I've tried haven't worked with my TV – they produce a black screen but I can still hear the game from the TV.

Stephen Sharp, via email

There shouldn't be any incompatibility. Check that your TV can use an RGB signal (which is what the Dreamcast SCART lead carries), otherwise you might need to contact Toshiba's customer services.

KONAMI?

Are Konami developing for Dreamcast? If so will we see any *International Superstar Soccer* games?

Peter Mcleod, via email

Yes, I'm pleased to say that Konami will be releasing *Deadly Skies* and *Castlevania* for Dreamcast. They haven't announced anything on ISS yet, but keep your fingers crossed.

WRITE TO US

Want to get something off your chest or get the official response to a query that's been bothering you for ages? What are you waiting for, then? Get writing. Address your letters to:

Sega Q&A, ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email us at sega@dreamcastmag.co.uk. We're waiting to hear from you.

DC BOUND?
SPACE CHANNEL 5

Since our news story last month, many of you have emailed asking whether *Space Channel 5* will get a UK release. So we asked those in the know.

WHAT IS IT?

Damn strange, that's what. *Space Channel 5* is a dancing game where you play slinky TV reporter Ulala, who has to thwart an alien invasion by, er, cutting some rug. The game is the work of Tetsuya Mizuguchi, legendary creator of *Sega Rally*.

Dancing games are very popular in the Japanese market, and *SC5* has gone down a storm since its release in December last year. The gameplay is a bit like *Simon Says* or, perhaps more relevantly, *Wee Parappa The Rapper*. Commands are shouted out to you to move up, down, left, right and shoot, and you must follow these instructions to the beat, resulting in aliens getting their arses kicked and human hostages being rescued.

You might think the gameplay sounds simplistic, but the visuals make it a feast for the eyes – all Day-Glo retro in an *Austin Powers* stylee, if you will. It's very peculiar, but *Space Channel 5* would make a novel addition to the European Dreamcast line-up if it's released.

COMING TO DC?

We have every reason to believe that *SC5* will make it to Dreamcast, although nothing official has been announced yet. However, Sega's Mark Hartley is optimistic. "I'm currently quite confident that we'll see a European release for *Space Channel 5* in the first half of this year," he says. "It's a great game, and further proof that Dreamcast games don't have to be complicated to be fun."

CHATBACK

DON'T AGREE WITH SOME OF OUR REVIEWS? THEN THIS IS THE PLACE TO HANG OUT. SEND US YOUR VIEWS – WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. REALLY WE WOULD

△ *TrickStyle*: "Rushed out?" asks Ian Collins.

TRICKSTYLE

REVIEWED: ***ODM*** **#1, 7/10**
WHAT WE SAID: "Visually eye-popping, and deeply involving."

"*TrickStyle* left me feeling cheated. I paid £40 for a game which I completed in less than 24 hours. It felt unfinished, as if it stopped at the halfway point. There were times when I jumped between arenas in the velodrome, got stuck halfway and fell into a bottomless black hole; at other times the camera got 'lost' under the border and the bowl itself; occasionally when I jumped, my shadow followed me into the air instead of staying on the ground. Surely on a 128-bit machine we shouldn't still be seeing this? All of this makes it feel as though the game has been rushed out.

"It's the most disappointing game I've ever played. Which is a shame, because it's quite good, the controls are good and the movement is smooth."

Ian Collins, via email

COMMENT: We've had quite a few letters concerning the potential of *TrickStyle*. Luckily it doesn't seem as though developers are rushing out titles; if a game is bad, then that's because it really is (see the *Fighting Force* letter).

△ *Fighting Force 2*: "Total crap."

FIGHTING FORCE 2

REVIEWED: ***ODM*** **#4, 3/10**
WHAT WE SAID: "Dull action adventure that leaves you snoring."

"After reading the promising preview of *Fighting Force 2*, I went out on the game's release day and bought it. When I got home I played it for about five minutes, then I stopped. It's awful! The combat moves are total shite, and the weapons are crap. All you can do is go around and kick in the scenery, which makes a crappy explosion.

"I think the score of 3/10 that you gave it was very generous considering the game is total crap."

David Wilko, via email

COMMENT: Yep, *Fighting Force* stinks big-time. Hopefully our review and this letter will prevent people from buying it and then feeling disappointed.

01:11
adidas

△ *Virtua Striker 2*: bad slowdown.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2

REVIEWED: ***ODM*** **#4, 7/10**
WHAT WE SAID: "Easy to play, but insanely frustrating for footie simulation fans."

"After reading your review of *Virtua Striker 2* I decided to nip out and buy the game. One thing you failed to mention in your review is the bad – and I mean horrendous – slowdown while you're playing the game, especially in the penalty box with lots of players. I haven't seen anything *this* bad for years. Sega really shouldn't have released it until they'd sorted out this problem."

Terry, via email

"Being a big fan of *Virtua Striker* in the arcades, I got really excited about the Dreamcast release of version *2000.1*. From the moment I put it in my Dreamcast to the time I switched it off, I was in nirvana. Two-player mode just makes this game even better. I can't believe people aren't rating this game highly. Your 7/10 was obviously a typo."

Chen, via email

COMMENT: It looks as if we have two different opinions of this game. Personally we're going to stick with the middle ground and reiterate that it's a great game, but the 'arcadey' feel doesn't quite cut it at home.

If you two want fight about it, then we have both your email addressees.

△ *Soul Calibur*: "It's crap!" shock.

SOUL CALIBUR

REVIEWED: ***ODM*** **#2, 10/10**
WHAT WE SAID: "One of the greatest games ever made. Do not let yourself miss out."

"This may shock you all, but I can't stand *Soul Calibur*! No, that's not a typing error, I really do *hate* the game.

"I'm one of those people who hates fighting games. Football games are more my sort of thing. I agree, *SC*'s graphics are stunning, and I was tempted to buy it on the strength of that. But I borrowed my friend's copy and it was *crap!* After ten minutes of playing I was completely bored."

Darren Riches, via email

"I think you were too generous with your score for *Soul Calibur*. The faults in it may be small, but they add up: the Internet mode from the Japanese version is missing; Astaroth and Rock, Sophitia and Lizardman, Kilik and Suen Mina, Xiangua and Hwang, Edge Master and Inferno are almost identical when it comes to moves; Maxi is not playable with two nunchukas; the game may be a challenge, but not in the long term; and there's bound to be a sequel. I'm not saying *Soul Calibur* is a bad game, but a score of 9/10 would have been a bit more realistic."

David Lyons, via email

COMMENT: It doesn't seem like you gave it much of a chance – ten minutes is nothing.

On our score for *Soul Calibur* being too high, we spend a long time playing the games before we review them, and we felt that 10/10 was the only score that did this excellent game justice.

We want to hear from you. Send your comments to: **Chatback, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.** Alternatively, email them to: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with 'Chatback' in the subject line.

ARE YOU UP TO IT?

Prove your worth by coming top of our challenges and you could win a fantastic Dreamcast prize.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

You can enter any of the challenges set. To enter, just play the given game with a camera at the ready. When you get your score, quickly take a picture of the screen and post it, along with your name, address and score to: High Scores, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

- **Come out on top in any of the challenges we've set this month and you can win a copy of Capcom's spine-chilling *Resident Evil 2*. Better get some practice in, cos with a prize like this the competition will be stiff.**

THE PRIZE

RESIDENT EVIL 2
Dreamcast

SOUL CALIBUR

TIME ATTACK MODE, BEST TIME, ANY CHARACTER

Fight your way through the Time Attack mode as quickly as you can, then do your David Bailey bit at the end results screen showing your total time. If you're quick enough your reward will be a copy of *Resident Evil 2*.

WORMS ARMAGEDDON

BEST DEATHMATCH SCORE

Play through the Deathmatch mode in *Worms*, then take a photo of the results screen showing your rank, number of wins and number of losses. The best player wins. Simple isn't it?

SALVATION IS AT HAND WITH

TIPS Q&A

STUCK ON A GAME? NEED HELP? WELL, THIS IS WHERE WE ANSWER THOSE GAMING QUERIES THAT HAVE BEEN GIVING YOU SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

I got *HOTD 2* last week and have been playing it whenever I have any spare time. I can just about beat Magician, but when I get to Emperor I get thrashed. Can you help?

Andrew Burns, Croydon

Try to hit the red ball inside Emperor. If he fires balls at you, destroy them first. If he charges at you, shoot at the red ball to repel him. In his second phase, attack the boss's weakspots from earlier in the game. Finally, fire at the red ball to destroy him.

TOTAL TIME 1'24"042
LAP TIME 0'12"850
27
POSITION 14th /16
DELTA HF
3 142 km/h

△ Make *Sega Rally 2* sing to your tune with these handy hints.

SEGA RALLY 2

Is it true that there is a cones 'mini game' on the Arcade Riviera course.

Stephen Howey, Newcastle

For the cone game go to Riviera on Arcade Mode practice and knock down the two red cones on the last right turn of the course. Now do another lap keeping an eye on the left wall, where you'll find an opening and the mini game.

SHADOW MAN

I keep finding blocks that burn me when I try to move them. Also, I keep seeing Govis across the magma. Can I make myself fireproof?

Travis Visco, via email

You need to get the different gads. The toucher gads are found in the temple of fire and enable you to move burning blocks, and the marcher and anger gads (found later in temples of prophecy and blood) enable you to walk on and swim in lava.

SONIC ADVENTURE

Sonic 2 had codes which enabled you to access level select and Super Sonic from the sound test. The sound test in *Sonic Adventure* looks a bit suspicious. Could there be similar cheats in this game?

Kirk, via email

Anything's possible, Kirk. However, at the moment the only known way to access Super Sonic is by completing the game with all the other characters. If there is a code that does this, we're sure Sega will release it when they feel the time is right.

How do you defeat *Sonic's* end boss. Robotnik's Viper robot keeps on killing me. Can you help me, please?

Damon Horsefield, via email

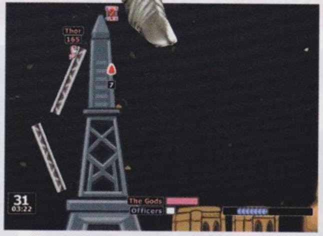
Sure thing, Damon. To grease the robot first run from one end of the platform to the other to avoid his lasers. Jump and hit him when he laughs at you. Now, jump across the green circles to hit him next time he taunts. When he fires rotating platforms, jump on and hit him again. When he starts exploding, get ready to dodge him or you're a gonner, mate.

△ Super Sonic: if he doesn't look like this, you're playing with plain old 'Sonic'

In *Sonic* I have all of the characters and Super Sonic's name shows up. However, when I play with him he looks just like Sonic. Can you help?

Niall Crilly, via email

First head to the floating island with the Chaos Emerald temple on it to find Knuckles to the right of the temple. Head to the top of the temple. After the cut sequence run to the rain forest to find Chaos and the last emerald. You will now become Super Sonic to fight the last boss.



△ Outwit the opposition and wipe out their leader with the help of the Aqua Sheep.

WORMS ARMAGEDDON

I'm stuck on a level called Water Surprise in *Worms*. I can't get at the enemy worm under the Eiffel Tower. How do I kill him?

John Davies, via email

First knock off the mines with a grenade. Get one worm halfway up the tower, then build a long girder to get to the top of the tower. Grab the crate, launch the Aqua Sheep, and fly it underwater to kill the enemy. (See our *Worms* guide on page 114).

PHONE FOR HELP

Having trouble with a game and can't wait to see a reply in these pages? Then you need to check out…

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- *Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In the case of problems, please call Customer Services on 01753 755937.*

CONTACT INFO

We want to help you with your gaming problems. Write to us at: Tips, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Or email us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk

CHEAT ZONE

WHO SAYS CHEATS NEVER PROSPER? NOT US, BECAUSE WITH THIS LOT YOU CAN WIN ON THE TOUGHEST GAME

HYDRO THUNDER

Turbo start

Hold the left trigger while the game is loading. As number three fades, release and hold the right trigger. As number two fades, do the opposite. Then release left and hold right when number one fades.

03:01.41
39
BOOST
7 OF 16
OLD TIME 03:45.66
YOUR TIME 03:03.90

△ A wee smidge of trickery and *Hydro Thunder* will give up its secrets.

Unlock all boats and courses

Finish any race in the top three and when you get a high score enter your name as '?PB' to unlock all the courses and boats including the bonus ones.

INCOMING

Cheat menu

When you switch the game on press Start. As the main menu appears press Up, Down, Left, Right, X, Up, Down, Left, Right, Y to reveal the cheat menu. Infinite lives, infinite shields… they're all yours.

PEN PEN TRI-ICELON

Alternate costumes

Finish in first place on all courses and variations twice to unlock every costume.

READY 2 RUMBLE

Different two-player arenas

To fight in the Championship Arena, hold R when choosing a fighter. For a two-tier arena, hold L when choosing. L+R to play in the gym, and X+L+R to play outside.

SEGA RALLY 2

All cars and years

To unlock all cars, enter the following cheat using the D-pad on the Title screen: Up, Up, Down, A, A, Right, trigger, B, B, Down.

To unlock all years in the 10-year mode, enter the following cheat on the D-pad on the title screen: Down, Down, Up, B, B, Left, trigger, A, A, B.

SHADOW MAN

Cheats

To get the cheats in *Shadow Man* you must find secret areas dotted around the levels. After earning a cheat, the Book of Shadows appears in your inventory…

Play as Bloodshot: In the Temple Of Blood there's an area where a hammer knocks down a pillar. Jump to the small hole in the wall from this pillar to activate the cheat.

Play as Deadwing: In Asylum Playrooms is a corridor of doors. Go through one, find a pool table and jump on it for the cheat.

Flame-grilled LeRoi: Go Temple Of Life to Altars Of Loa and find the baton. Run up to the altars, and when you get to the right one 'Cheat Activated' appears on screen.

Invisible Man: On the Down Street Station level, while looking for Jack The Ripper you find an area with bathrooms in it. Run into them to activate the cheat.

△ Can't be arsed finding *Shadow Man's* secrets for yourself? Let us do it for you.

SOUL CALIBUR

Secret Missions and new title screen

You may think you've finished Mission Battle mode, but there are two hidden areas containing seven new missions. Finish these and you become the Soul Calibur Master and have a new title screen to prove it.

On the far-right screen, move your cursor over the Korea area and you hear the noise you get when you pass over a mission. Press A here to find the first new missions. The other missions are found on the far-left screen around Poland. Once again the icon is invisible, but makes a noise when discovered.

Secrets of the art gallery

Certain new features are hidden behind the pictures in the art gallery. Here are their numbers:

Extra costumes: 39, 58, 70, 94.
Character profiles: 15. Exhibition theatre and characters: 54, 137, 155, 177, 183, 189, 198, 207, 225, 229, 230, 233, 239, 251, 256. Extra Survival mode: 167. Opening direction: 179. Weapon select (press L on character select screen): 224. Metal mode (R on character select screen): 265. New stages: 19, 31, 32, 68, 79, 83, 104, 123, 130.

CLASSIC CORNER

DESCEND LIKE VULTURES ON THESE ALL-TIME GREAT CHEATS FOR SOME OF THE OLDER TITLES. THESE'LL HAVE YOU PLAYING ALL THE GOLDEN OLDIES AGAIN

SEGA RALLY 2

Bonus cars

To unlock these cars you must finish first on set years in Regular Mode. Mitsubishi Lancer EVO 4: second year. Toyota Celica GT-Four ST-185: third year. Mitsubishi Lancer EVO 3: fourth year. Peugeot 106 Maxi: fifth year. Lancia Delta Integrale: sixth year. Fiat 131 Abarth: seventh year. Peugeot 205 Turbo: eighth year. Renault Alpine A110: ninth year. LANCIA 037 Rally: tenth tear.

SPEED DEVILS

Cheat codes

All cars and tracks:
While playing a game, press B, Right, B, Right, Up, B, Up.
Extra money :
While playing a game, press A, Right, A, Right, Up, B, A.
Infinite nitros:
While playing a game, press Down, Up, Down, Up, A, X, A.
Skip current class:
While playing a game, press Down, Right, Down, Right, A, X, A.

YOUR TIPS

KNOW ANY GOOD TIPS OR SECRETS NO-ONE ELSE DOES? THEN SEND THEM TO US. IF WE PRINT THEM YOU GET A COPY OF UBI SOFT'S FANTASTIC NEW RPG *EVOLUTION*

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Here's an easy method I found to beat Onslaught. Pick Chun-Li as your first character, and another good fireballer as your second. When the battle begins, crouch in the corner and wait for him to charge. When he does, stay crouched and tap Medium Kick, Hard Kick and repeat. This should combo him until he dies. Use your super-moves to beat the next version.

Dan Plantin, via email

READY TO RUMBLE

Set the internal clock to October 31 to activate the Halloween mode which gets you skeletons in the crowd. Or make it December 25 when you'll see Christmas trees in the audience during a prize fight.

Paul Stockley, Bournemouth

SHADOW MAN

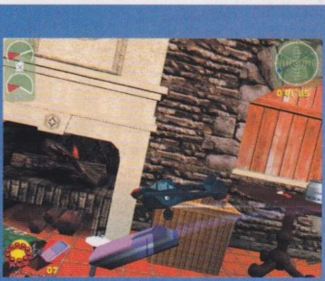
To get the Violator weapon, you must collect at least three accumulators and plug them into the case in the Asylum Playrooms. To get a second one, get all 120 souls and climb the bloodfall to the left of you when you first entered Deadside.

Aryud Worra, via email

SONIC ADVENTURE

Playing as Knuckles, if you dig between the palms by City Hall's front entrance you find an emblem. Also, if you go to Big's house as Big and pick up the bed, you find a rod which can be cast further.

Ian Roberts, Liverpool



TOY COMMANDER

To fix a broken toy, pause and press A,X,B,Y,A and Y. To unlock maps, pause and press X,A,Y, B,A and X. You'll hear a tone if you've it right.

Laura Walsh, via email

UEFA STRIKER

If you complete the certification mode games, you get access to more Cup features. Also, an easy way to score is to sprint out of the way before the goalie dives, leaving the goal open.

Jack Young, Farnham

△ JON HARE, 33, DESIGN TROUBLESHOOTER AT CODEMASTERS
One of the co-founders of Sensible Software, Jon has had a mass of experience developing some of the top 2D games over the last 15 years. Favourite 2D game: *One Man And His Droid*.

△ STEPHEN GODFROY, 26, ONLINE RETAIL EDITOR
Began playing games on the BBC Model B, then got a 3DO. Has subsequently got his mitts on every console since then, including Dreamcast. Favourite 2D game: *Planetoid*.

△ KATS SATO, 34, PRODUCER AT SEGA
Has been working at Sega for the past ten years creating such classics as *Golden Axe* and *Outrunners*. Is currently executive producer on the eagerly awaited *Metropolis Street Racer*. Favourite 2D games: *Bomberman*, *R-Type*

2D VS 3D

DO 2D GAMES HAVE ANY PLACE IN THE FUTURE OF GAMING, OR IS 3D ON THE VERGE OF WIPING THEM OFF THE FACE OF THE PLANET? *ODM* GETS DIMENSIONAL WITH A HANDFUL OF GAME EXPERTS

ODM: Are 2D games going to become extinct in the next five years?

JASON: I hope not, because there's room for lots of different types of games. I think 3D is fantastic and it frees us from a number of restrictions, but it also creates gameplay and design issues. I think some of the most intriguing games can be 2D. I don't see 2D and 3D necessarily fighting against one another. I think they're both useful. It depends on what's needed to make the best game.

STEPHEN: The problem is that 2D games aren't as marketable or as fashionable as 3D because they're technologically 'constrained' compared to 3D games. Now that computer games have become a commodity, they're based

△ JASON KINGSLEY, 34, CO-OWNER OF REBELLION

Has been making games for seven and a half years. Created one of the only decent games on the Atari Jaguar – *Alien Vs. Predator* – and then went on to pen *Aliens Vs. Predator* for PC and *Rainbow Six* for PlayStation. Currently working on a series of titles. Favourite 2D game: The original *Civilization*.

△ JOE RYDER, 30, DIRECTOR OF NEW COMPANY INTREPID

Harking from a film and video background, Joe has been involved in the games industry for five and a half years, and has worked on classics such as *Theme Hospital*, *Dungeon Keeper* and more. Favourite 2D game: *Karate Champ*.

around the idea of image and branding.

JASON: *Tiberian Sun* did very well though, and that's just 2D.

STEPHEN: But it's a sequel – they're the exception. But I do think that 2D games will continue. You only have to look at the *Grand Theft Auto* series to see how effective 2D can be – you could only have portrayed the sense and scale of the cities featured in the game using 2D.

JON: Yeah, you have to look at what 2D can do well. 2D does some things better than 3D and other things worse. Like text – it's often better in 2D than in 3D because it's more readable. But at the moment 3D graphics are very glamorous, and in many ways they're good. There's a place for both 'dimensions'.

JOE: I'd argue though that in terms of production values, 2D games have gone as far as they can go with the likes of the *Abe* series [top-selling platformer on PC and PlayStation]. I want to take gaming to the next level, and we have to go 3D or else we're just looking backwards when we need to be going forwards. What consumers are demanding now is an experience from a game – and people's experiences in the real world are 3D. You're used to having all your senses stimulated in a 3D sphere, and that's why it's become more fashionable to replicate experience-based products in a 3D world.

ODM: So why does everyone seemingly regard 2D as the past and 3D as the future?

JON: It's like comparing black and white films to colour movies – 2D came first.

JASON: And 3D came second. It was down to technological constraints back then; with 3D it was down to processor speeds. There was a time when you had to design environments that had to have 20 polygon characters in them and that was the most you could do!

ODM: What does 2D offer over 3D?

JON: In terms of controls, we did a game called *Mega-lo-Mania* many years ago and the whole game was controlled by a series of icons on a panel. Now, you could've used the most amazing 3D graphics in the game, but the actual gameplay was 2D – it's easier to control. In some respects 2D is better – it's easier to get your mind round the gameplay. After all, we've been reading books for so many years now that we're used to seeing information presented to us in a 2D form rather than in 3D.

STEPHEN: 2D condenses and symbolises a lot of information, so you can control environments.

LOST IN SPACE

ODM: Is there a downside to 3D?

JON: The one that typifies it for me was *Mario 64*, which was extremely revolutionary at the time but the control system was not quite right. Sometimes you were dragged up in the wrong direction, leaving you swearing at the ▷

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

game. I guess that the downfall of 3D is spatial awareness. We're all used to 3D environments in real life, but we've also got nerves and can feel where we're sitting in real life. The problem with 3D in games, and the reason why I'm bad at them, is because I'm actually quite spatially aware in real life; I just don't fear bumping into walls in games.

"IF YOU WANT CONTROL, YOU HAVE TO GO 2D; IF YOU WANT TO BE CONTROLLED, YOU USE 3D"

– STEPHEN

JASON: Yeah, in real life you have binocular vision, you also have your sound cues and so forth. When we did the Alien character in *Aliens vs. Predator*, we made it so you could walk on all the surfaces. One of the biggest problems was disorientation. You could put people in a room with one exit and tell them that it was up on the ceiling. They would then run up the wall and everything would move. And they'd get lost within the room. It was a real challenge to overcome that.

JON: We're not saying that 2D has the advantage at all. What we're saying is that 3D has its own deficiencies, as well as 2D. If you had something like *Command & Conqueror* in 3D, you'd probably struggle to select the units as quickly as you can with a 2D environment because you've got to work out where your pointer is. The more we put the actual gameplay into 2D, the more control we've got.

STEPHEN: If you want control, you have to go 2D; if you want to be controlled, you use 3D. Football games are the perfect example of trying to get the balance between 2D and 3D right. For me, the joy of playing a footie game is passing the ball around the pitch and controlling the team. The trouble with 3D footie games sometimes is that if you're passing it from defence up to a winger, you can't see the winger. You've just got to boot the ball up there and hope he's up there. The real issue is getting the balance right. I'm not too bothered about seeing the footballers' faces, I'd rather see the whole thing so you can play it as a team. That's the attraction. Or else I'd just go out and play football in real life.

JON: Gameplay is about tuning. You have a good idea at the start about what you want, and then you tune the game like mad at the end. The problem with 3D games is that so much effort is put into creating the graphics and controlling them. By the time the title gets within a month of release, the focus has been on the technological side and not on the gameplay.

ODM: Have you ever played a 3D game which you thought would work better as a 2D game?

JON: No.

JOE: No, I can't think of any either.

JASON: I can think of some strategy games that might have worked better in 2D. One of the things with real-time strategy games is speed – you need a large number of units and obviously speed. In 3D versions, sometimes the frame rate collapses just when you don't want it to – you've got a tank rush on, and then everything starts chugging along. It's exactly at that moment when you need the frame rate to work so you can aim properly. I think that there are some games that would have worked better as 2D games, but I suspect that the developers moved into 3D because the marketing people wanted them to.

JON: What's happened with games to a certain extent, especially with 3D graphics, is that the 100 per cent control you have with sprites in 2D games has gone now with 3D titles. You don't have the same precision any more. That's a big sacrifice.

STEPHEN: Do you see a time when we'll get that precision back in 3D?

JASON: Processors are getting back up to the speed where we will be able to get back the control found in many 2D games. It's almost as if we went backwards, and now we're going forwards again with consoles like Dreamcast.

BIGGER, BETTER, FASTER...

ODM: It's been said that 2D games don't sell any more. Is that true?

JOE: Yeah. No doubt about it.

STEPHEN: I think that if a 2D game is distinctive enough then you can sell it. *GTA* proved that. *Abe's Oddysee* was a bit of surprise on PlayStation, but even that's going 3D. I think DMA wanted to keep *GTA*'s next sequel 2D, but I think I read something the other day that said they've had pressure from all quarters saying: "It's not representing the latest technology, it's not technologically on a par with what's happening today." The trouble is that games are a consumer good – they have to be the latest and greatest, and that's where the emphasis goes.

JOE: We have to listen to focus groups at every stage of our development, and if we were to even suggest that our product was going to be a 2D game, then we really wouldn't be able to get much further in the development cycle, because it's just assumed that our products will be 3D. 2D is not even an option.

KATS: But remember that 3D technology is just one style of game. For example, if we hadn't discovered *Tetris* and we released that game now, I think people would still buy and play it even if it is 2D.

JON: Yeah, but you wouldn't get a contract with that.

JASON: No one would buy it from you if you pitched it to them.

KATS: People buy Gameboy though. They don't expect 3D games, they still buy 2D games even now.

JON: That's a really good example of 2D still being alive.

KATS: It's still a very big market in Japan.

ODM: Why are 2D games so successful on Gameboy but generally not on other platforms?

KATS: If we say 3D games are just a fashion, then people wouldn't buy Gameboy games. But they do.

STEPHEN: The Gameboy is a standardised gaming medium, whereas Dreamcast is a lifestyle item – it represents the cutting edge; it's susceptible to fashion trends.

ODM: Is the move from 2D to 3D also down to developers wanting to move forward?

KATS: From a visual point of view, yes.

JASON: It's also driven by commissions. You've got to do presentations, and if you said: "I really want to do a very innovative 2D game," you'd probably have to spend a lot of your own money proving it first, and then it would still be an uphill struggle to complete the deal. You know what's going to happen though – we accept these rules, and then someone's going to come along with the best 2D game ever!

ODM: What about the archetypal 2D shoot 'em ups, then – have they gone forever?

KATS: I like 2D shooting games like *R-Type*. That was a brilliant shooting game. I think we're missing those kind of titles nowadays.

JON: *R-Type* is a good example. They've just disappeared, haven't they? Your spatial awareness is much more complete in a 2D environment – it's your fault if you crash.

KATS: There were many good shoot 'em ups in the past, but we don't see them any more. It's just because people want to see 3D games.

ODM: Finally, if 2D games aren't on the verge of extinction, are they merely going to end up being pushed into a niche market?

STEPHEN: It's down to the principle of the game – the challenge. As long as that remains, then 2D will always be here. 3D is the latest incarnation of gaming, but there will always be a place for 2D gaming.

JASON: I think 3D is just another weapon in the game designer's armoury. There was a time when 2D was 'in' because we couldn't do 3D; 3D is in because we can now do 3D.

JON: Developers use the right style of graphics to fit their material – whatever does a particular job best. It's too simplistic to say 2D is out and 3D is in. Everything has its place.

> "3D IS JUST ANOTHER WEAPON IN THE GAME DESIGNER'S ARMOURY"
>
> – JASON

DIRECTORY

THE LOT. A SUMMARY OF EVERY DREAMCAST GAME REVIEWED IN *ODM*

FIGHTING

SOUL CALIBUR

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 10/10

It's the best-looking game ever made. It's got some of the best characters ever put in a video game. It's got hundreds of perfectly-balanced moves and 100% accurate control. It will take years to master, but absolutely anyone can pick it up and love it straight away. No doubt about it, you *must* own this game. You must!

READY 2 RUMBLE

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 9/10

Loads of freakily-realistic loudmouths go fist to face in this all-out boxing party game. The career mode means it's fun for one player – for a while – but you'll never tire of 'winner stays on' matches with a group of friends. *Ready 2 Rumble* is in a league of its own – a fantastic and a wonderful way of getting hooked on Dreamcast.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3: SAIKYO DOJO

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 8/10

The best game in the classic *Street Fighter* series with a bunch of Dreamcast-exclusive features. Masses of fantastic characters battle it out in a 2D game with far more depth than most 3D fighters could even dream of. It's dead fiddly to play with the standard Dreamcast pad though.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb

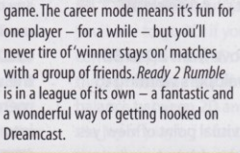
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

When it came out in the arcades, nothing could touch it. Unfortunately, the Dreamcast version lost a lot of its impact on the way home, with slightly disappointing graphics, home extras and sound. It's still a quality game if you can live with its shortcomings, but with classy rivals like *Soul Calibur* around, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* feels a little . . . old.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE: 5/10

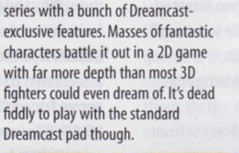
Heaps of classic game and comic book characters go handbags for the ultimate tag team fight. Things get crazy – perhaps a little too crazy. It's hard to tell what's going on a lot of the time, so button-bashing becomes the order of the day. It's fun at times, but if you want a quality 2D fighting game check out *Street Fighter Alpha 3*.



POWER STONE

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10

A fighting game with a difference. Collect three power stones and you transform into a super-powered version of yourself. Scraps for these gems involve rocket launchers, massive combos, thrown furniture and ridiculous explosions. It's amazingly fast, looks great and is jam-packed with goodies. Very, very cool.



PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

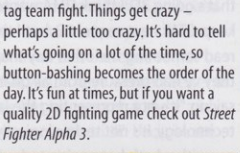
REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 7/10

In true Japanese Animé style, stylish big-haired heroes fly around chucking enormous fireballs at each other in mid-air. While it's not going to appeal to most people, *Psychic Force 2012* has a certain charm that means fighting fans looking for a change of scenery may well find something special here.

DYNAMITE COP

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE: 5/10

You are, first: a cop; second: a martial arts expert. Using weapons you can pick up along the way – as well as your feet and fists – it's your job to scrap whole gangs of enemies at once on a variety of levels. Not great, to be honest. It's very slow, and though smashing things should always be fun, it gets dull pretty quickly.



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 5/10

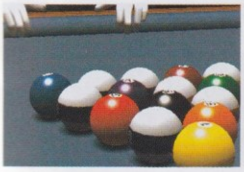
Once upon a time, *Mortal Kombat* was the most exciting fighting game in the world. Then it lost its sense of humour and everyone realised that it was actually a bit crap. This 'Gold' edition has more characters and moves than ever, but is most likely going to keep you playing for just a few hours.

SPORTS

UEFA STRIKER

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10

While it may look a bit ropey at times, *UEFA Striker* plays better than any other football game on Dreamcast at the moment. It's fast, it's got plenty of top teams, and it's easy enough to pick up. With two (or more) players who know what they're doing, this is great fun.



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

You get to play against an assortment of characters, including Jimmy himself. The jerky graphics make it a bit fiddly to play, but it shouldn't take long before you get the hang of it. There's also a range of extra games including the retro classic *Dropzone*, draughts, chess and darts.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 (VER. 2000.1)

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 7/10

An arcade-perfect conversion with shiny new knobs on. Cup modes, rankings and tournaments all beef up an already good game. However, it doesn't play much like real football – more a basic arcade interpretation of it.

NFL BLITZ 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #1, SCORE 7/10

Blitz is an all-out arcade version of American football – simple rules, fewer players, smaller pitches and flaming balls. And, seeing as the rules are cut-down, you can stomp on other players as much as you want and not get told off. It's a right laugh in four-player mode.

SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 6/10

A footie game which sadly shares little with the original – and excellent – Saturn version. It's a tad on the slow side, for a start, and there's a sad lack of atmosphere. It's an okay game, but we can all do better than okay, can't we?

SEGA BASS FISHING

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

The ultimate novelty game? Quite possibly, but *Sega Bass Fishing* is ace – for a while, at least. The fishing rod controller is the standout feature, enabling you to haul away just like the real thing. That said, it won't hold your attention long-term, especially once you've completed the original mode. Top party game, mind.

NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

REVIEW: ISSUE #2, SCORE 6/10

Like *NFL Blitz*, this is a fast, over-the-top translation of an American sport relatively few Brits care about. As such, it's a laugh when played with a bunch of like-minded friends, but won't give you anything much to sink your gamesplaying brain into. Fun every now and then, but not worth a full £40.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #2, SCORE 5/10

Average football games don't go down particularly well in the UK, so an average American football game has no chance. Weak graphics and very slow controls mean *NFL Quarterback Club 2000* is certainly not going to get anyone into the sport – in fact, it could well put Joe Montana off the NFL for life (he's this old… ah, never mind).

ADVENTURE

SONIC ADVENTURE

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 9/10

Sonic and chums return for a massive 3D action adventure packed with variety and amazing set-pieces. The high-speed sections are occasionally a little *too* fast, with the camera view sometimes getting left behind, but otherwise this is a blinder!

EVOLUTION

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 8/10

Role-playing games are often a little intimidating to the average gamer, but *Evolution's* simple interface and entertaining story make it the perfect entry point to the world of RPGs. Things get a little repetitive towards the end, but overall it's a fun adventure.

SHADOW MAN

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 6/10

A grown-up platform adventure with plenty of gore, swearing and voodoo magic. While there are people who'll love it for the storyline, the dull level design will soon drive most to boredom. Cool creepy sound effects and freaky music – it's just a shame it's so dull.

TOY COMMANDER

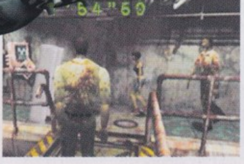
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10

Not the kids' game you might expect at first glance. In fact, most kids wouldn't have a chance of getting off the first level, it's so tough. A hardcore war game with varied missions and masses of vehicles, *Toy Commander* is like an evil robot wolf in a fluffy bunny's clothing.

SOUL FIGHTER

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

A fantasy fighting game which pretends to have some kind of adventure running through it. There are some nice ideas (such as using combinations of attacks to earn magic power), but overall it just involves wandering from room to room, tapping buttons as you go. Yawn.



RESIDENT EVIL 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 7/10

The classic horror game series makes it to Dreamcast with a fairly standard conversion of the PlayStation and PC original. It's spooky, funny, and genuinely shocking at times, and the combination of puzzles and blood-soaked action will see most people playing to the end. Already feeling pretty dated though.

BLUE STINGER

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 7/10

Like *Resident Evil 2*, *Blue Stinger* sees you wandering around, killing freaky monsters and solving occasional puzzles. A long, drawn-out story and dodgy controls slow the action down, and there's only so much bad acting one person can take. If you've got the patience, you may make it to the end.

FIGHTING FORCE 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 3/10

Fighting Force 2 borrows elements from old Megadrive fighting game *Streets of Rage* and *Tomb Raider*. Unfortunately, it feels like it's been knocked up in a couple of weeks, and doesn't look any better either. Stupid enemies, dull levels, and walking-pace 'action' make it a real duffer of a game.

DRIVING

3
Shell
TELECOM ITALIA
GOODYEAR
MAGNETI MARELLI

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DREAMCAST

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 8/10

Being officially endorsed, *F1 World Grand Prix For Dreamcast* (to give it its full title) is a must-have for fans. It looks gorgeous and is packed with features, but disappointingly has a few sloppy glitches.

SEGA RALLY 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 8/10

Everyone got excited when one of the finest arcade racers made its way home. Loads of edge-of-your-seat racing, to-die-for looks and loads of superbly-designed tracks meet in one top-speed, super-cool package. If it's arcade action you want, *Sega Rally 2* has it to spare.

SPEED DEVILS

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

A crazy racer with hurricanes, police chases, gambling and UFOs was always going to float our boat, and with the addition of two-player and arcade modes you get slick stuff backed with some funky tunes. The only problem is that it might be a little too easy at times.

TRICKSTYLE

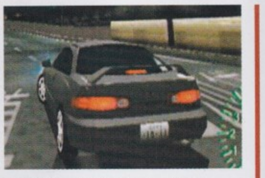
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

Futuristic hoverboard racing where flashy tricks are needed if you want to make it to the end. It's a great idea, and it certainly looks lovely, but a lack of speed makes it a little hard to get into. The mental techno soundtrack gives it a style you'll find hard to resist though.

MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

The lack of an official licence makes this less appealing than *F1 World Grand Prix For Dreamcast* straight away, and the tacky graphics don't help things. There are some nice ideas, such as the classic races, but you only need one F1 game.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 5/10

Challenge the other drivers on the road to a race. If you win you get the money. It really is that simple. Trouble is, there's only a certain amount of fun you can get out of one track, even if extra bits do get added occasionally. Graphics are nice though, especially the car headlights.

RE-VOLT

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 7/10

Racing remote-controlled cars means this is at least different from the majority of driving games, and its cause is helped further by crisp graphics, speedy action and a cool multiplayer mode. Even so, it's fairly simple stuff and will only keep you entertained for so long.

SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 7/10

Set on 12 tracks with six different bikes to ride, *Alstare* is strangely addictive. The game does have its faults though, especially regular pop-up and barmy collision detection which can ruin things. Fast fun, but that's as far as it goes.

HYDRO THUNDER

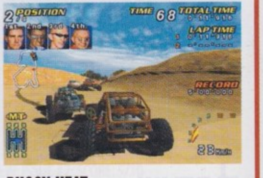
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

Pick a super-fast speedboat, then a track, then race it. Collect turbo boosts along the way and seek out hidden shortcuts. Easy, yes? This is a novel racing title with many clever moments but it doesn't quite hit the spot – a shame really as it could have been a lot better.

SNOW SURFERS

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

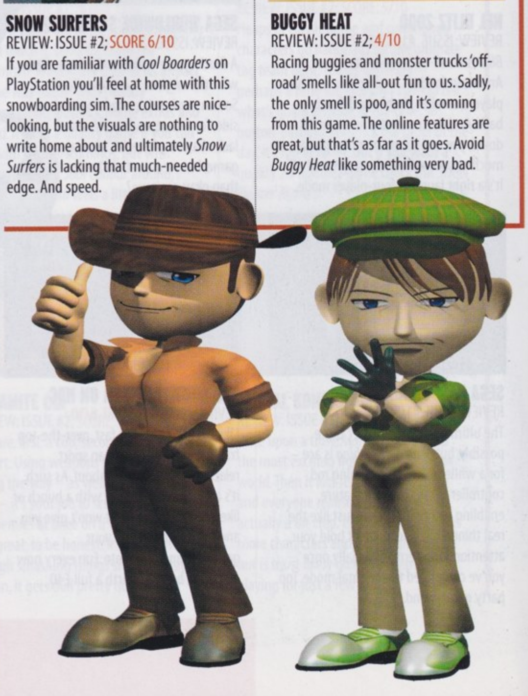
If you are familiar with *Cool Boarders* on PlayStation you'll feel at home with this snowboarding sim. The courses are nice-looking, but the visuals are nothing to write home about and ultimately *Snow Surfers* is lacking that much-needed edge. And speed.



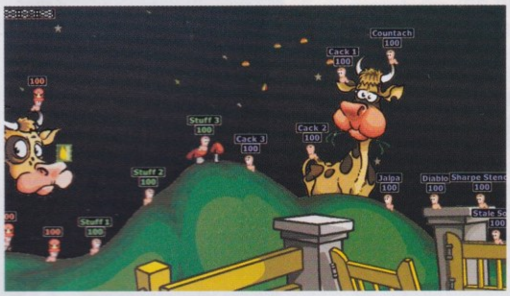
BUGGY HEAT

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; 4/10

Racing buggies and monster trucks 'off-road' smells like all-out fun to us. Sadly, the only smell is poo, and it's coming from this game. The online features are great, but that's as far as it goes. Avoid *Buggy Heat* like something very bad.



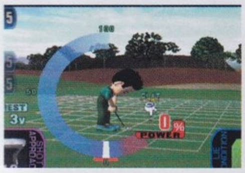
MULTIPLAYER



WORMS ARMAGEDDON

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 8/10

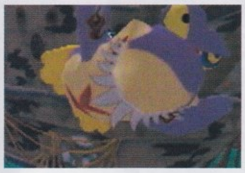
Worms Armageddon is one of the most enjoyable multiplayer games around – it's hardly worth playing on your own. The graphics are simple and well animated, but really aren't all that important. With a near infinite number of stages, you'll be playing forever.



TEE OFF

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 7/10

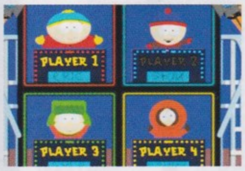
If the idea of a round of golf is about as appealing as eating an ashtray, then chances are you'll want to skip this. Don't. *Tee Off* is golf for people who don't like golf – it's entertaining, basically – is dead easy to get into and has an ace four-player mode.



PEN PEN

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

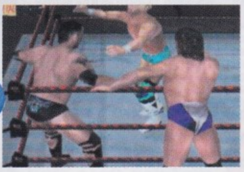
Race cute, cuddly characters by walking, sliding on your belly, and swimming. The game is pretty easy, so you'll probably have it licked within a few hours, but there is a four-player mode which is always fun. *Pen Pen* is cute and innovative, but way too short.



SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 3/10

A multiplayer game where you and three chums play mini-games and answer questions. Unfortunately you need a lot of useless general knowledge to succeed, and apart from the characters, the game is nothing like the show. Kenny doesn't even die! Avoid.

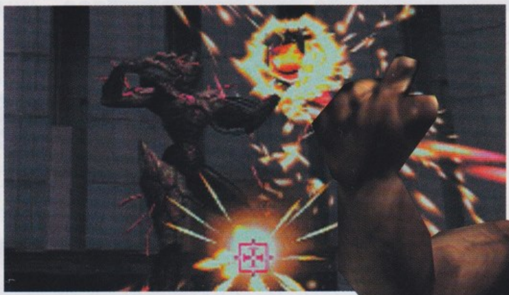


WWF ATTITUDE

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 3/10

More of a freak show than a wrestling game. Featuring a bunch of badly animated and unresponsive wrestlers, you'll swiftly conclude the only fun part is the option to create your own wrestler – but only to laugh at it. This game has somehow made one of the most entertaining things in the world boring.

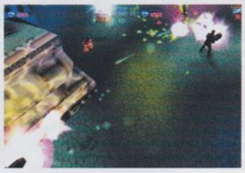
SHOOTING



HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 9/10

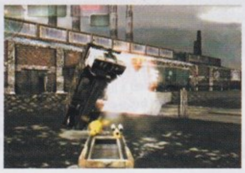
They don't come much more simple to play than this: Pick up a gun. Shoot zombies. Watch entrails litter the screen. Repeat till everything's dead and you're faster on the draw than even Quick-Draw McGraw. It sounds a good idea, and it is.



MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 7/10

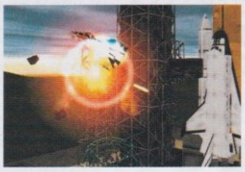
Forget tactics, strategies and maps, this one's aimed straight at the trigger finger – shoot anything that moves, if you can see it moving in the mass of multicoloured explosions flying around. It's short-lived confusing fun.



VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENSE

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 5/10

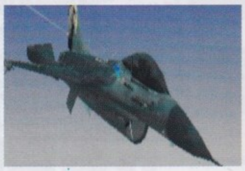
Cars with guns driving around shooting one another. It was an okay PlayStation game a year ago, and even though it's been upgraded for Dreamcast it's still nothing special. If you get the chance to rent games, this is a perfect one for an evening's cheap entertainment.



INCOMING

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

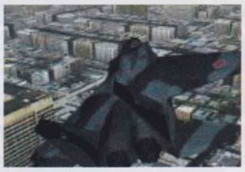
Brainless shoot 'em up where your aim is to shoot the bad guys and avoid the good guys. You get to master an aeroplane, tank and a Harrier jet (among loads of others), and while there's some adrenaline to be squeezed out if it, it soon gets too tricky and too dull.



DEADLY SKIES

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; 5/10

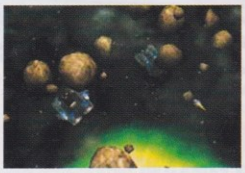
Completely average and rather drab-looking blaster that fails to improve upon *Aerowings'* flight sim aspirations and doesn't really make it as shoot 'em up in its own right. A little more imagination and some more nimble planes could have made this game a lot better.



AEROWINGS

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

Aerowings is a take on the world of formation aerobics. which boasts bags of style but not much content. While you must respect the fact that the game rewards flying skills rather than fighting skills, it's not a lot more than a pleasant way to spend an afternoon.



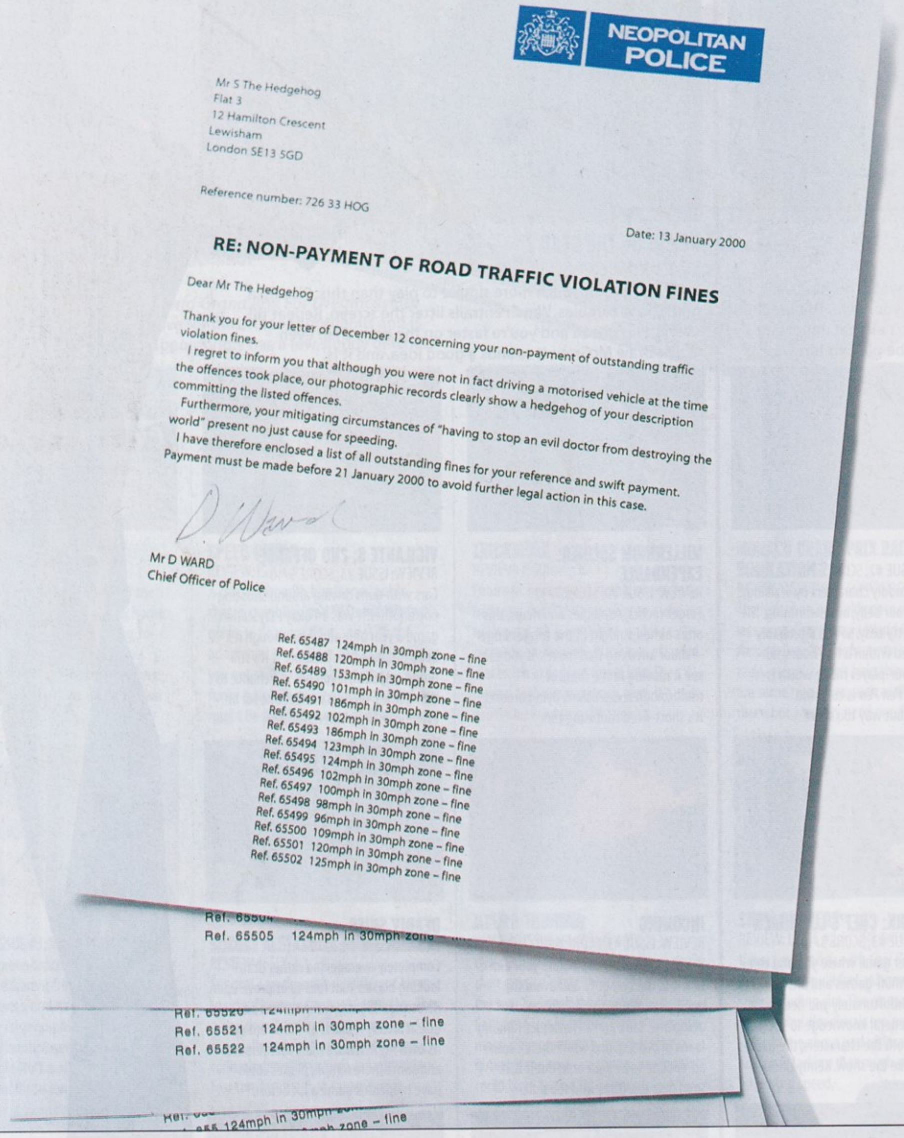
ARMADA

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 4/10

Armada puts you in charge of a small gunship to stop aliens threatening the peace of the universe. Simple shooting sections are supposed to be livened up with a bit of an RPG-style storyline, but it's all so basic and samey it feels like a complete waste of time.

'ELLO,'ELLO,'ELLO...

Who's been a naughty little hedgehog, then?



NEOPOLITAN POLICE

Mr S The Hedgehog
Flat 3
12 Hamilton Crescent
Lewisham
London SE13 5GD

Reference number: 726 33 HOG

Date: 13 January 2000

RE: NON-PAYMENT OF ROAD TRAFFIC VIOLATION FINES

Dear Mr The Hedgehog

Thank you for your letter of December 12 concerning your non-payment of outstanding traffic violation fines.

I regret to inform you that although you were not in fact driving a motorised vehicle at the time the offences took place, our photographic records clearly show a hedgehog of your description committing the listed offences.

Furthermore, your mitigating circumstances of "having to stop an evil doctor from destroying the world" present no just cause for speeding.

I have therefore enclosed a list of all outstanding fines for your reference and swift payment. Payment must be made before 21 January 2000 to avoid further legal action in this case.

D. Ward

Mr D WARD
Chief Officer of Police

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Ref. 65488 120mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65489 153mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65490 101mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65491 186mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65492 102mph in 30mph zone – fine
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Ref. 65494 123mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65495 124mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65496 102mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65497 100mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65498 98mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65499 96mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65500 109mph in 30mph zone – fine
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Ref. 65504
Ref. 65505 124mph in 30mph zone

Ref. 65521 124mph in 30mph zone – fine
Ref. 65522 124mph in 30mph zone – fine

124mph in 30mph zone – fine

COMING SOON TO DREAMCAST?

MAN UTD FOOTBALL

Oh no! David Beckham's Ferrari has broken down thanks to the bizarre Versace petrol he's been using, and so you must get him to the stadium in time for the important European match! This scrolling fighting game sees David walking through the streets of Manchester, randomly attacking strangers with insane moments of extreme and inexplicable violence. Thanks to the Awesome Power of Dreamcast™, David's full range of explosive attacks has been included – get one of Dave's fingers into the eye of a small child, then use the analog stick to realistically gouge out the youngster's eyeball. Players may also use the *Sega Bass Fishing* rod attachment as a rudimentary clubbing and stabbing weapon.

The game costs £499.99, with updates released on a weekly basis. On sale in London only.

MATCH OF THE DAY FOOTBALL

Thanks to an exclusive deal with the BBC, this new football game features an introduction from BBC *Match Of The Day* presenters Gary Lineker and Alan Hansen!

Sadly, all the interesting football rights have been bought by BSkyB's software development division, leaving *MOTD* with only the teams featuring in the Worthington Cup third round replays. Can Grimsby overcome the poor pitch surface of Plymouth Argyle's Home Park stadium and come out as victors? Will Wrexham's off-colour striking partnership return to form to help them through a tricky away game at Birmingham City?

Features commentary by John Motson, who realistically fakes excitement at even the scrappiest of goals, *Match Of The Day Football* is set to become the new standard in third-division soccer excitement.

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HIDDEN COMPO: In which year was *Tomb Raider* first released on Sega Saturn? Mark entries 'Hidden Compo' and mail them to the usual address byThursday 24 February. Last month's winner is John Adams from Sale, who wins a funky VM unit for correctly answering that Dreamcast's UK launch date was 14 October 1999.

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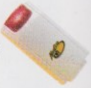

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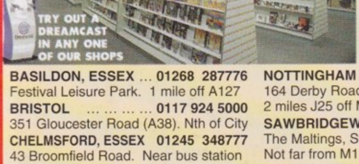

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